
*
* SOCIAL ASSESSMENT STUDIES
* OF
* DISTRICT BARABANKI

(29)

ASH Social Survey
Barabanki

Sponsored by
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Conducted by
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CHAPTER I

DISTRICT BARABANKI

The District

District Barabanki is Western part of the State's Eastern districts. On its East are districts Bahraich and Gonda, on its West is district Lucknow, on North is Sitapur and on its South are districts Rae Bareli, Sultanpur and Faizabad. Its boundaries lie in between river Ghaghra on the South-East and river Gomti on the South-West.

The district has a geographical area of 4462 sq. kms. divided into seven Tehsils and 17 Development Blocks for the purpose of administration and development. Besides one Zila Parishad, 2 Nagar Palikas and 10 Town areas and one Census Town, the district has 2087 revenue villages. Among them 2052 are inhabited and 35 uninhabited. There are 1556 Gram Sabhas and 153 Nyaya Panchayats. During 1992-93, 8775 hectares land was under forests.

Population

The total population of the district is 24,32,980. Among them 13,09,439 were males and 11,23,541 females.

according to Census 1991. The population is heavily concentrated in the rural areas (90.76 per cent). The percentage of urban population is, therefore, significantly low (9.24 per cent) as against the state's 19.84 per cent. As per Census 1991 there were 4,42,090 families living in 4,33,879 houses. Thus, 8,211 families had no independent house to live in. In comparison to the state (473) 550 persons were living in per sq. km. area. The decennial population growth in the district was significantly lower (21.62 per cent) than the state's (25.16 per cent) during 1981-91. There were 858 females per thousand males. Of the total population, Scheduled Castes constitute 27.02 per cent, Backward Castes 49.81 per cent and Muslims 20.45 per cent, which is significantly higher than the percentage of their population in the state (21.04 and 15.9 per cent respectively).

The main workers, constitute 33.91 per cent of the population of the district, slightly higher than the state's 29.73 per cent. Their proportion in the rural areas of the district was 34.47 per cent as against 30.52 per cent in the state, while they constitute 28.41 per cent in the urban areas as compared to 26.56 per cent in the state. Among the total workers 79.9 per cent were engaged in primary sector, 5.5 per cent in secondary and 14.6 per cent in the tertiary sectors. The female workers in the district constitute 8.97 per cent of their population.

Among those engaged in primary sector (79.9 per cent) 64.2 per cent were farmers. The economic condition of a vast majority of them was extremely poor. According to Agricultural Census 1990-91, we find that the size of 80.58 per cent of total agricultural land holdings was only upto one hectare. They covered only 43.88 per cent of the total area under cultivation. Another 13.22 per cent of the holdings were in between one hectare and less than 2 hectare. Thus, 93.8 per cent of the total number of holdings were of less than 2 hectares. The area under these holdings was 72.31 per cent of total agricultural land in the district.

During 1992-93 the percentage of net irrigated area was 76.78 per cent of the net area sown. The district has a network of 1406.9 km. long Canal through the Sharda Sahayak Development Project through which 48.68 per cent of the net irrigated area was covered. Another major source is tubewell, public as well as private, which covered 48.94 per cent of the net irrigated area. There are 200 public tubewells and 52,310 private pump sets. Among other sources are wells, ponds and pumping sets which together irrigated 2.38 per cent of the land.

During 1992-93 there were 40 registered private industrial units employing 4,000 workers; one large industry under Public Sector employing 1,030 workers; and, 846 Small Scale Units employing 1,951 workers. Thus, the district has an almost insignificant industrial base as far as employment

opportunities are concerned. The number of workers engaged in cottage industry was significant, i.e. 17,000 largely due to handlooms.

By 1982 all the 13 towns in the district had been electrified. Till 1993-94 besides 722 Harijan Bastis 994 out of 2,050 inhabited villages had been electrified. The length of metalled roads in the district is 1,177 kms. A total of 1,180 villages are linked with roads for all seasons. In 1993-94 the number of Post Offices in the district was 369, out of which 344 were in rural and 125 in urban areas. During the same year 1,003 telephones were available in the rural and 2,047 in the urban areas.

The district had 155 branches of different categories of Banks in 1992-93. Among them 39 were belonging to different nationalised Commercial Banks, 22 Cooperative Banks, 4 Land Development Banks and 90 Rural Banks. Besides, Credit Cooperative Societies were 153 in 1993-94. A Total of 2,54,611 persons were their members.

The district has 27.02 per cent of the population of Scheduled Castes and about half of its population consists of Backward Castes. A large population is landless and poor. The various poverty alleviation programmes are attempting to improve their conditions, particularly of those living below the poverty line. During 1994-95 a total of 7,884 families were assisted under the Integrated Rural Development

Programme. Among them 6,212 families were of the Scheduled Castes. Under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana employment was generated for 23,000 mandays. During the same year the number of houses constructed under Nirbal Varg Avas Yojana and Indira Avas Yojana were 905 and 1,151 respectively.

As regards the facilities for medical and public health and family welfare are concerned, we find that in 1993-94 there were 3 Allopathic Hospitals - all in urban areas, 2 of them also had separate Hospitals for the treatment of patients of Tuberculosis, Fileria and Malaria; 18 Homeopathic Hospitals, 17 in rural and 1 in urban areas; 20 Ayurvedic/Unani Hospitals, 17 in rural and 3 in urban areas; 72 Primary Health Centres; 21 Family Welfare Centres, out of which 16 were in rural areas; and, 406 Sub-Centres. It is, however, to be noted that 58.52 per cent of the sanctioned posts of Physicians were in position in the district. The biggest short-fall was in Allopathic Physicians who were only 44.8 per cent of the total sanctioned posts. Besides, there were 1,050 Private Physicians, 268 Allopathic, 229 Ayurvedic/Unani and 553 Homeopathic. The average population per Sub-Centre in the district was 5,968 while per CHC/PHC 33,655. As per the norms stipulated by the Government of India there should have been one Sub-Centre per 5,000 population and per CHC/PHC 30,000.

The provision of safe source of drinking water has been made in all the 2,052 inhabited villages through India Mark-

II handpumps. Besides, people also use wells for drinking water. The drinking water is provided through pipe-lines in the areas of 2 Nagar Parishad and one city.

Under the Integrated Child Development Project there is a provision of distribution of nutritional food among children below 6 years, pregnant women and breast feeding mothers. The project has covered 10 out of the 17 blocks in the district. They are : Harakh, Haidergarh, Dewa, Dariyabad, Masauli, Siddhaur, Trivediganj, Ramnagar, Banikoder and Nindoora. There were a total of 918 centres. In each of the centres an Aanganwadi worker and an helper were working. During 1993-94 nutritional food was distributed among 45,492 children and 10,704 women. The number of beneficiaries, however, declined during 1994-95 to 34,416 children and 9,132 women, as due to non-availability, the nutritional food was not distributed in five blocks namely, Haidergarh, Dewa, Harakh, Dariyabad and Masauli. This shows the extent of concern of the agencies for the scheme and the target population in the district.

In the area of family planning the district can claim a better position as 36.97 per cent of the eligible couples were effectively protected by modern methods during 1991-92. The district was placed at 25th position among the 63 districts of the state. Among those effectively protected 21.45 per cent had opted for the Sterilisation while 15.52 per cent had preferred spacing methods. Thus, we can safely deduce that in Barabanki more people were conscious of the

need of limiting the family than those in a larger number of districts.

Literacy

The district Barabanki is poorly placed in the area of literacy. It occupies 56th rank among the 63 districts of Uttar Pradesh. Against 41.60 per cent of literates in the state the district Barabanki has 30.42 per cent. The gap between the literacy rates of the state and Barabanki is of 11.18 per cent. The comparative literacy rates for Barabanki and Uttar Pradesh are as under :

Table 1 : LITERACY RATES BY SEX AND RESIDENCE

Population	Barabanki	Uttar Pradesh
Total	30.42	41.60
Rural	28.53	36.66
Urban	48.87	61.00
Male (Total)	43.00	55.73
Female (Total)	15.41	25.31
Male (Rural)	41.51	52.11
Female (Rural)	12.96	19.02
Male (Urban)	57.79	69.98
Female (Urban)	38.68	50.38

As stated above the difference in the state and the district literacy rates was that of 11.18 per cent. From the Table 1 we find the differences were higher in case of Males (12.73 per cent) as compared to females (9.90 per cent) in the total population. The differences between the literacy rates of the state and the district in respect of urban population (12.13 per cent), urban males (12.19 per cent) and rural males (10.6 per cent) were wider than in the case of total rural population (8.13 per cent), urban females (11.7 per cent) and rural females (6.06 per cent).

Within district Barabanki and within Uttar Pradesh the differences in per cent literates were as under :

Table 2 : PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE IN LITERACY RATES

Population	Barabanki	Uttar Pradesh
Male - Female (Total)	27.59	30.43
Male - Female (Rural)	28.55	33.09
Male - Female (Urban)	19.11	19.60
Urban - Rural	20.34	24.34
Urban - Rural (Male)	16.28	17.87
Urban - Rural (Female)	25.72	31.36

Table 3 : BLOCK-WISE LITERACY RATES IN DISTRICT BARABANKI
 (CENSUS 1991)

Block	Literacy Rates		
	Total	Male	Female
Banki	33.13	46.39	17.04
Masauli	33.48	48.79	15.69
Dewa	29.72	43.17	13.24
Harakh	31.54	46.29	13.91
Fatehpur	32.44	44.91	17.45
Suratganj	22.91	32.04	11.06
Ramnagar	29.10	40.75	14.74
Nindoora	25.04	36.60	10.82
Dariyabad	27.69	40.79	11.98
Pure Dalai	22.73	33.18	10.11
Mawai	22.25	34.40	7.99
Rudauli	25.40	38.87	9.84
Banikodar	31.59	46.75	13.85
Haidergarh	26.17	39.93	10.23
Trivediganj	35.20	51.28	16.44
Siddhaur	29.45	43.27	13.02
Total (Rural)	28.53	41.51	12.96

Since Block Sarauli Gauspur was created after the last Census the data pertaining to this block is not available.

The data shows that among the 16 blocks nine had higher literacy rate than among the total rural population of the district. The eight blocks had higher literacy rates among their male population than among the total rural males in the district. In nine blocks the literacy rates among their female population were higher than the literacy rates among rural females of the district.

Educational Scenario of the District

The educational scenario of district Barabanki during 1994-95 is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 : EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO OF DISTRICT BARABANKI

Educational Level	No. of Schools		No. of Students		No. of Teachers	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Females
Junior Basic	1680	(Mixed)	313654	114373	4842	910
Senior Basic	248	49	65059	18050	1354	216
Higher Secondary	53	5	45177	11406	543	83
Degree	3	(Mixed)	2696	N.A.	49	-

The educational scenario of the district indicate the reason for the district occupying 56th place in literacy among 63 districts of the state. The number of educational institutions at all levels is insufficient. At least 93 villages have no Junior Basic Schools in nearby areas and children of these villages have to cover a distance of atleast 3 kms. to reach school. Similarly children belonging to 486 villages have to walk for about 5 kms. to reach Senior Basic School. Similarly the number of Higher Secondary School serving to the population of 2,052 inhabited villages and 14 towns may be termed as insufficient.

The estimated population in the age group 6-11 and 11-14 years of the district was 3,98,563 and 2,55,844 respectively. On the basis of this population 78.70 per cent of children were enrolled in Junior Basic and only 25.43 per cent in Senior Basic Schools. As compared, the percentage of children in these age groups enrolled in the state was 91.32 and 27.47 respectively.

A comparative picture of Junior Basic Schools in Barabanki and Uttar Pradesh over a period of three years is presented in Table 5.

The comparative picture of district Barabanki and Uttar Pradesh indicate the following features :

- (a) As against Uttar Pradesh, the percentage of children enrolled among the total children in 6-11 years age group has been significantly lower in Barabanki.

**Table 5 : COMPARATIVE POSITION OF JUNIOR BASIC EDUCATION
IN BARABANKI AND UTTAR PRADESH**

Year	% of children enrolled in JBS	No. of schools	Average No. of students per school	Average Girls per School	Average Teachers per School	Average Female Teachers per School	Average Students per Teacher
District Barabanki							
1991-92	69.53	1584	174.94	63.04	2.99	0.57	58.60
1993-94	73.96	1626	181.28	64.68	2.94	0.56	61.56
1994-95	78.70	1680	186.70	68.08	2.88	0.54	64.78
Uttar Pradesh							
1991-92	80.91	78085	189.80	71.02	3.39	0.62	55.99
1993-94	85.82	79522	197.67	74.81	3.37	0.62	58.72
1994-95	91.32	82023	203.92	78.88	3.29	0.60	61.91

- (b) Average number of all students as well as girls per school has been lower in Barabanki as compared to Uttar Pradesh.
- (c) Average number of all teachers as well as female teachers per school has been lower in Barabanki as against Uttar Pradesh.
- (d) Average number of students per teacher has been higher in Barabanki as compared to Uttar Pradesh.

A further analysis of the data indicate that in comparison to Uttar Pradesh progress in the field of primary education in Barabanki has been positively significant except in the case of enrolment of girls and appointment of female teachers. The increase in number of Junior Basic Schools in Barabanki was 2.65 per cent in 1993-94 over 1991-92 as against 1.84 per cent in Uttar Pradesh. The increase in 1994-95 over 1993-94 was 3.32 per cent in Barabanki against 3.15 per cent in Uttar Pradesh.

The increase in enrolment of boys in Barabanki was 6.37 per cent in 1993-94 over 1991-92 and in 1994-95 over 1993-94 by 6.41 per cent as against Uttar Pradesh's 6.07 and 6.41 per cent respectively. The increase in enrolment of girls in the district was 5.32 per cent as against 7.28 per cent in the state in 1993-94 over 1991-92. The increase of girls enrolment in 1994-95 over 1993-94 in district Barabanki and Uttar Pradesh was the same, i.e. 8.75 per cent.

The number of teachers in Barabanki increased by 1.25 per cent in 1993-94 over 1991-92 and 1.13 per cent in 1994-95 over 1993-94 while in Uttar Pradesh the increase in their number was by 1.12 per cent and 0.93 per cent respectively. The increase in number of female teachers in the district was by 0.78 per cent in 1993-94 over 1991-92 and in the state by 0.96 per cent while in 1994-95 over 1993-94 the increase in the district was by 0.78 per cent and in the state by 0.89 per cent.

The Selected Blocks

The basic characteristics of population as per Census 1991 of the block selected in Barabanki for the study are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 : SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION OF SELECTED BLOCKS

Block	Popula- tion	Sche- duled Caste	Back- ward Caste	Literacy Percentage		
		(%)	(%)	Male	Female	Total
Mavai	128745	25.64	47.53	34.40	7.99	22.25
Banki	140146	23.82	55.62	46.39	17.04	33.13
Trivediganj	129653	36.52	41.94	51.28	16.44	35.20
Siddhaur	143145	39.30	42.17	43.27	13.02	29.45
Banikodar	135782	32.55	40.40	46.75	13.85	31.59
District Total (Rural)	2208102	28.82	49.81	41.51	12.96	28.53

As stated earlier about 91 per cent of the population is living in rural areas. More than three-fourths of them belong either to the Scheduled Castes (28.82 per cent) or the Other Backwd Castes (49.81 per cent). The composition of the population itself indicate that a vast majority of them were economically poor. Besides, most of the Muslims (20.45 per cent) were also economically poor and socially backward.

Table 7 : SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE SELECTED BLOCKS

Information	Block				
	Banki	Banikodar	Mavai	Siddhaur	Trivediganj
No. of Villages	89	106	94	168	102
No. of Gram Sabhas	78	102	104	118	82
No. of Nyaya Panchayats	9	9	10	11	10
Females per 1000 males	864	859	862	861	857
1991-91 Population					
Growth Rate	22.2	21.7	22.1	22.1	21.9
Density of Population	623	559	477	550	556
Estimated Population in 6-11 years	26887	21890	25950	20590	21706
Junior Basic Schools	101	92	82	89	92
Senior Basic School (Total)	12	11	11	12	16
Senior Basic School (Girls)	4	1	3	3	4
High School/Intermediate*	-	2	2	5	3
Degree Colleges*	-	-	-	-	-
% Enrolled in JBS	92.07	88.47	90.71	88.66	90.00
Students per Teacher in JBS	56.01	57.81	118.88	68.89	71.56
Schemes in operation for Girl child	-	-	-	-	-
Schemes for SC children	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship
Schemes for ST children	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship	Scholar- ship
Schemes for Muslim children	Scholar- ship (Not for all)				
Schemes for All Students	3 kg. wheat p.m. per student				

*Figures for 1992-93 from Sankhikiya Patrika of the District.

The socio-economic backwardness is reflected in the low literacy rates of the district (30.42 per cent) which placed the district in 56th position among the 63 districts of the state. The literacy rate for the rural part of the district was 28.53. In the area of female literacy the district occupied 57th position (15.41 per cent). The female literacy rate in rural areas of the district was 12.96 per cent which placed it on 48th position in the state.

Among blocks selected for social assessment study Trivediganj had the highest literacy rate among the total rural population followed by block Banki (which had the highest percentage of literates among females), Banikodar, Siddhaur and Mavai. Block Mavai had the lowest percentage of literates among females in the district.

The block-wise information provided by the district officials of the Education Department is presented in Table 7.

The Selected Villages

Out of a total of 17 blocks, five were selected for the present study. From each of the blocks two villages were selected on the basis of discussion with the block level Educational Officials. The village were selected keeping in mind (a) a sizeable population of disadvantaged groups, especially from the perspective of education, i.e. the Scheduled Castes and Muslims; and (b) where the situation

with regard to enrolment/drop-out of girls and disadvantaged children was either especially bad or particularly good.

The villages selected from the five blocks are listed in Table 8.

Table 8 : SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SELECTED VILLAGES

Block	Villages	Population			% of Lite- SC Muslim (App- rox.)	child- ren in years	Enrol- ment (Approx)	Primary School	
		Total	SC	Muslim				Pub- lic	Pri- vate
Mawai	Newara	2800	815	1365	38.0	414	82.85	Yes	No
	Kondra	1800	518	878	20.0	263	61.60	Yes	No
Banki	Jinhauli	1900	310	1200	22.0	292	66.78	Yes	Yes
	Mohammadpur Chowki	2400	275	1462	36.0	422	80.81	Yes	Yes
Trivedi- ganj	Pokhara	2500	980	54	27.0	405	68.40	Yes	Yes
	Sahawar Dharauli	1535	620	27	38.0	218	82.57	Yes	No
Siddhaur	Usmanpur	2200	885	775	31.0	327	79.20	Yes	Yes
	Nasirwapur	750	330	350	21.0	115	61.74	Yes	No
Banikodar	Ibrahimabad	1614	240	315	37.0	220	83.18	Yes	No
	Bhikarpur	1525	445	175	26.0	215	63.26	Yes	No

The data presented in Table 8 is based on the information provided by the Gram Pradhan/Members of Gram Sabha/knowledgeable persons. The four villages from block Trivediganj and Siddhaur were selected keeping in view the high Scheduled Castes population while the villages from block Banki and Mawai were selected on the basis of higher population of Muslims as the officials estimated that the two blocks had a fairly large Muslim population. The villages from the remaining block, i.e. Banikodar were selected keeping in view the mixed character of population.

The population in the village Pokhara and Sahawar Dharauli of block Trivediganj had about 39 and 40 per cent respectively of Scheduled Castes. The proportion of persons belonging to the same castes in the population of Usmanpur and Nasirwapur of block Siddhaur was about 40 and 44 per cent respectively.

The Muslims constituted of about 63 per cent of population of village Jinhauli and 61 per cent of Mohammadpur Chowki of block Banki. In block Mawai about 49 per cent of the population of village Newara and Kondra belong to Muslims.

The village data shows a positive trend in relationship between literacy rate and enrolment rate. There is also a significant indication that higher enrolment rate is not necessarily the result of the existence of a private school in the village.

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CHAPTER II

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The education of a child depends on many things, the socio-economic background being one of the important. In this chapter, a brief profile of the socio-economic conditions of the sample respondents, i.e., their guardians is provided. The present social assessment study was designed to cover the sample households from the villages selected for this purpose, so as to get an idea of the attitude and opinion of the parents about the education of their children.

For the purpose of the present study, Focus Group Discussions were held. Two villages from each of the five blocks were selected for this purpose. From each village 10 households were also selected by simple random sampling basis. The heads of these households were interviewed to find out the conditions of schooling of their children, their attitude towards the school system of education and the education of their children in general and girls in particular.

Age and sex are important social variables that influence the attitude of parents towards their children's education. Of the total respondents 46 per cent were males

Table 1 : SEX-WISE AND AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS
OF BARABANKI DISTRICT

Block	Villages	Respondents			Age Group of Respondents					
		Male Female Total			Upto 30		31-45		46+	
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Mawai	Newara	6	4	10	1	-	5	3	-	1
		(60.0)	(40.0)	(100)	(10.0)		(50.0)	(30.0)		(10.0)
	Kondra	3	7	10	-	-	1	7	2	-
		(30.0)	(70.0)	(100)			(10.0)	(70.0)	(20.0)	
Banki	Jinhauli	4	6	10	1	1	3	5	-	-
		(40.0)	(60.0)	(100)	(10.0)	(10.0)	(30.0)	(50.0)		
	Mohammadpur	5	5	10	-	2	5	3	-	-
	Chowki	(50.0)	(50.0)	(100)		(20.0)	(50.0)	(30.0)		
Trivedi-	Pokhara	3	7	10	-	1	3	6	-	-
ganj		(30.0)	(70.0)	(100)		(10.0)	(30.0)	(60.0)		
	Sahawar	7	3	10	1	-	6	3	-	-
	Dharauli	(70.0)	(30.0)	(100)	(10.0)		(60.0)	(30.0)		
Siddhaur	Usmanpur	4	6	10	-	1	4	5	-	-
		(40.0)	(60.0)	(100)		(10.0)	(40.0)	(50.0)		
	Nasirwapur	3	7	10	-	-	3	7	-	-
		(30.0)	(70.0)	(100)			(30.0)	(70.0)		
Banikodar	Ibrahimabad	5	5	10	-	-	5	5	-	-
		(50.0)	(50.0)	(100)			(50.0)	(50.0)		
	Bhikarpur	6	4	10	-	-	6	4	-	-
		(60.0)	(40.0)	(100)			(60.0)	(40.0)		
Total		46	54	100	3	5	41	48	2	1
		(46.0)	(54.0)	(100)	(3.0)	(5.0)	(41.0)	(48.0)	(2.0)	(1.0)

and 54 per cent females. In this manner both the sexes have an almost equal representation in the study. Most of the respondents, i.e., 89 per cent (41 per cent males and 48 per cent females) belonged to the middle, i.e. 31-45 years age group. 8 per cent of the respondents were young, below 30 years of age. Only 3 per cent of the respondents were elderly, i.e. above 46 years of age (Table 1).

The caste of a child in our socio-economic system determines his opportunities for education. In the 10 villages of Barabanki 35 per cent of the respondents interviewed were Scheduled Castes. 80 per cent of the respondents in village Dharauli (Block Trivediganj) and 70 per cent in village Usmanpur and Nasirwapur (Block Siddhaur) belonged to this caste. 40 per cent of the respondents were Muslims. In village Jhinauli (Block Banki) all the respondents were Muslims and 90 per cent in village Mohammadpur Chowki of the same block were of this community. 12 per cent of the respondents belonged to Other Backward Castes and only 13 per cent belonged to the General or Upper Castes (Table 2).

The educational qualifications of the head of household and its members determines the attitude towards education of the children to a great extent. This is because education brings enlightenment and enthuses the parents. In the sample villages of Barabanki 67 per cent of the respondents were illiterate suggesting a miserable state of education in the

Table 2 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Block	Villages	General Castes	Scheduled Castes	OBC	Muslims
Mawai	Newara	-	-	4(40.0)	6(60.0)
	Kondra	1(10.0)	2(20.0)	1(10.0)	6(60.0)
Banki	Jinhauli	-	-	-	10(100)
	Mohammadpur Chowki	-	1(10.0)	-	9(90.0)
Trivedi-ganj	Pokhara	3(30.0)	6(60.0)	1(10.0)	-
	Sahawar Dharauli	2(20.0)	8(80.0)	-	-
Siddhaur	Usmanpur	-	7(70.0)	3(30.0)	-
	Nasirwapur	-	7(70.0)	-	3(30.0)
Banikodar	Ibrahimabad	4(40.0)	2(20.0)	-	4(40.0)
	Bhikarpur	3(30.0)	2(20.0)	3(30.0)	2(20.0)
Total		13(13.0)	35(35.0)	12(12.0)	40(40.0)

sample households. Of the illiterates 21 per cent were males and 46 per cent were females. Of the 33 per cent literate heads 20 per cent had been educated upto the primary level (14 per cent males and 6 per cent females). Another 6 per cent (all males) had been educated upto the High School level and 7 per cent (5 per cent males, 2 per cent females) had been educated above the High School level (Table 3).

Table 3 : EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

Block	Villages	Educational Background									
		Illiterate		Literate		Upto Primary		Upto High School		Above High School	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Mawai	Newara	2 (20.0)	4 (40.0)	-	-	2 (20.0)	-	1 (10.0)	-	1 (10.0)	-
	Kondra	1 (10.0)	6 (60.0)	-	-	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	-	-	-	-
Banki	Jinhauli	4 (40.0)	6 (60.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Mohammadpur	3 (30.0)	4 (40.0)	-	-	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	-	-	-
	Chowki										
Trivedi-	Pokhara ganj	2 (20.0)	4 (40.0)	-	-	-	3 (30.0)	1 (10.0)	-	-	-
Sahawar	Dharauli	3 (30.0)	3 (30.0)	-	-	2 (20.0)	-	1 (10.0)	-	1 (10.0)	-
Siddhaur	Usmanpur	1 (10.0)	5 (50.0)	-	-	1 (10.0)	-	-	-	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)
Nasirwapur		2 (20.0)	7 (70.0)	-	-	1 (10.0)	-	-	-	-	-
Banikodar	Ibrahimabad	2 (20.0)	4 (40.0)	-	-	3 (30.0)	-	-	-	-	1 (10.0)
	Bhikarpur	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	-	-	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	2 (20.0)	-	1 (10.0)	-
Total		21 (21.0)	46 (46.0)	-	-	14 (14.0)	6 (6.0)	6 (6.0)	-	5 (5.0)	2 (2.0)

The occupation of the respondents determines their level of income and in turn it determines their capability to support the school going children. Of the total respondents in the sample villages, 37 per cent were wage labourers and

Table 4 : OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

Block	Villages	Occupation					
		Culti- vators	Wage Labour	Busi- ness	Service	House- wife	Other
Mawai	Newara	2 (20.0)	3 (30.0)	5 (50.0)	-	-	-
	Kondra	4 (40.0)	3 (30.0)	1 (10.0)	-	2 (20.0)	-
Banki	Jinhauli	-	6 (60.0)	1 (10.0)	-	3 (30.0)	-
	Mohammadpur Chowki	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	-
Trivedi-	Pokhara ganj	-	3 (30.0)	3 (30.0)	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	-
	Sahawar Dharauli	3 (30.0)	5 (50.0)	-	2 (20.0)	-	-
Siddhaur	Usmanpur	3 (30.0)	3 (30.0)	-	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	-
	Nasirwapur	-	7 (70.0)	1 (10.0)	-	2 (20.0)	-
Banikodar	Ibrahimabad	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	4 (40.0)	-
	Bhikarpur	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	-	4 (40.0)	-
Total		17 (17.0)	37 (37.0)	16 (16.0)	7 (7.0)	23 (23.0)	-

another 17 per cent were marginal cultivators. Among the women respondents about 43 per cent were housewives. 16 per cent of the total respondents were in trade/business and only 7 per cent were into service (Table 4).

Table 5 : INCOME-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Block	Village	Income (Annual)			
		Upto 8000	8001- 11000	11001- 18000	18001 +
Mawai	Newara	-	5(50.0)	3(30.0)	2(20.0)
	Kondra	-	6(60.0)	4(40.0)	-
Banki	Jinhauli	1(10.0)	6(60.0)	1(10.0)	2(20.0)
	Mohammadpur Chowki	-	3(30.0)	5(50.0)	2(20.0)
Trivedi- ganj	Pokhara	-	4(40.0)	4(40.0)	2(20.0)
	Sahawar Dharauli	-	4(40.0)	5(50.0)	1(10.0)
Siddhaur	Usmanpur	-	7(70.0)	2(20.0)	1(10.0)
	Nasirwapur	-	9(90.0)	1(10.0)	-
Banikodar	Ibrahimabad	-	2(20.0)	6(60.0)	2(20.0)
	Bhikarpur	3(30.0)	1(10.0)	6(60.0)	-
Total		4(4.0)	47(47.0)	37(37.0)	12(12.0)

Since a large number of the respondents were either wage labourers, marginal cultivators or housewives, one cannot expect a high annual income in the households. A large number of families of respondents belonged to the lower income group, i.e. they earned between Rs.8,000 to 11,000 annually. Thus, 51 per cent of the families of the respondents were below poverty line. 37 per cent belonged to the lower middle income group earning between Rs.11,000 to 18,000 annually while 12 per cent of the respondents' families were comparatively better off earning above Rs.18,000 annually. 4 per cent of the respondents' families can be classified as very poor since they earned less than Rs.8,000 annually (Table 5).

CHAPTER III

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND MEASURES SUGGESTED BY PARENTS

The objectives of the Social Assessment Studies was to understand the basic problems with regard to education of children belonging to the socially and educationally backward groups, i.e. the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslims, in general and the girl child in particular.

Besides conducting Focus Group discussions in the selected villages a sample of ten households was also selected for interviewing their heads through a structured Interview Schedule. The procedure adopted for selecting the sample of blocks, villages and the households was as under.

Since the data on enrolment and drop-out rates at the block level was not available, we selected the blocks on the basis of a higher proportion of population of the socially and educationally backward groups. The district had 27.02 per cent of the Schedule Caste (1991 Census) and 20.45 per cent of the Muslim population (1981 Census). We, therefore, selected two blocks each having larger proportion of the Scheduled Castes and Muslims while the fifth block was selected on the basis of the mixed character of its population. There were no Scheduled Tribes in the district.

Thus, block Trivediganj and Sidhor were selected for having a larger proportion of the Scheduled Castes population; blocks Banki and Mawai were selected for their having higher proportion of Muslims while Banikodar was selected as a mixed population block in which neither the Scheduled Castes nor Muslims had any significantly sizeable population.

Two villages per block were selected after discussions with the block level education officials. The criteria for selecting the villages was : (a) a sizeable population of the group on the basis of which the concerned block was identified; and (b) the percentage of children in 6-11 years age group enrolled in school. One of the villages was selected on the basis of high and the other with low enrolment rates. Since data on village-wise enrolment rates was not available, the opinion of the education officials formed the basis of selection of the villages.

From each of the villages a sample of ten households were selected and their heads interviewed. The selection of the sample of households was done on purposive random basis as only those households were selected which had school going age children; who were either enrolled in schools, had been enrolled in the past but dropped out; or, who had never been enrolled.

Enrolment

The Table 1 shows that in the one hundred households of the ten selected village of the district there were 304 children in 6-11 years age group, i.e. an average of 3 children per family. Among them 194 children (63.8 per cent) were enrolled in schools. The enrolment rates for boys were 72.3 and girls 55.0. The difference in the enrolment rates of boys and girls were found very significant in the two villages of block Banki, village Sahawar Dharauli of block Trivediganj and village Nasirwapur of block Sidhaur.

Table 1 : VILLAGE-WISE AND SEX-WISE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOL GOING AGE, NUMBER AND PERCENT ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS

Block	Village	Total Children Children Enrolled Per Cent Enrolled									
		Boys Girls Total			Boys Girls Total			Boys Girls Total			
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
MAWAI	Newra	16	14	30	10	8	18	62.5	57.1	60.0	
	Kodra	15	17	32	11	11	22	73.3	64.7	68.8	
BANKI	Jinhauli	17	13	30	11	6	17	64.7	46.2	56.7	
	Mohammadpur Chowki	16	11	27	10	4	14	62.5	36.4	51.9	
TRIVEDIGANJ	Shahawar Dharauli	13	17	30	9	3	12	69.2	17.7	40.0	
	Pokhara	15	16	31	11	13	24	73.3	81.3	77.4	
SIDHAUR	Usmanpur	15	19	34	14	16	30	93.3	84.2	88.2	
	Nasirwapur	19	15	34	12	1	13	63.2	6.7	38.2	
BANI KODAR	Bhikerpur	16	13	29	14	11	25	87.5	84.6	86.2	
	Ibrahimabad	13	14	27	10	9	19	76.9	64.3	70.4	
TOTAL		155	149	304	112	82	194	72.3	55.0	63.8	

In Table 2 we have shown the caste-wise enrolment rates in the total of 100 families of 10 villages of the district. It shows that the enrolment rates among the children belonging to the general Hindu castes and the other Backward castes were identical, i.e. 84.2 per cent and 85.7 per cent respectively. The enrolment rates for girls among the families of the OBCs was higher than among the higher castes (General). Another significant aspect of the data was that the enrolment rates among the children, boys as well as girls, belonging to the Scheduled Castes, and Muslims were equal and significantly lower than those among the children of General Hindu and OBC families.

Table 2 : CASTE-WISE AND SEX-WISE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOL GOING AGE, NUMBER AND PER CENT ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS IN THE TEN SELECTED VILLAGES

Caste	Children in Families			Children Enrolled in Schools		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
General	16	22	38	15(93.8)	17(77.3)	32(84.2)
Scheduled Caste	57	56	113	38(66.7)	26(46.4)	64(56.6)
O.B.C.	18	17	35	16(88.9)	14(82.4)	30(85.7)
Muslims	64	54	118	43(67.2)	25(46.3)	68(57.6)
TOTAL	155	149	304	112(72.3)	82(55.0)	194(63.8)

Among the 100 households surveyed, 110 out of 304 children (36.2 per cent) in 6-11 years age group were out of

the schools. Among girls, the non-enrolled were 45.0 per cent while among boys such children constituted of 27.7 per cent. The reasons for non-enrolment of children belonging to different caste groups are given in Table 3.

Table 3 : REASONS FOR NON-ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT CASTE GROUPS IN THE TEN SELECTED VILLAGES OF THE DISTRICT

(Multiple Responses) N=110

Reasons for Non-Enrolment	General Caste		S.C.		O.B.C.		Muslims		Total		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
	(N=43)(N=67)										
Long distance of School	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	7 (10.4)	
Child lack interest	-	-	13 (68.4)	11 (36.7)	-	-	-	5 (29.4)	1 (2.3)	18 (16.3)	12 (17.9)
No utility of Education	1 (100.0)	3 (60.0)	-	3 (100.0)	2 (100.0)	2 (66.7)	2 (11.1)	2 (2.3)	1 (11.6)	5 (13.4)	9
Poor Economic Condition of family	-	-	19 (100.0)	23 (76.7)	2 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	15 (38.4)	38 (88.4)	41 (61.2)	
Too early to send school	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Insincere teachers in School	-	-	5 (26.3)	2 (6.7)	-	-	-	3 (17.6)	-	8 (18.6)	2 (3.0)
Inconvenient School timings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Needed for family Occupation	1 (100.0)	-	19 (100.0)	-	2 (100.0)	-	17 (100.0)	28 (71.8)	39 (90.7)	8 (11.9)	
Needed for Household Work	-	5 (100.0)	-	22 (73.3)	-	3 (100.0)	-	-	-	30 (44.8)	
Needed for Care of Siblings	-	5 (100.0)	-	16 (53.3)	-	2 (66.7)	-	27 (69.2)	-	50 (74.6)	
No lady teachers in School	-	3 (60.0)	-	18 (60.0)	-	1 (33.3)	-	9 (23.1)	-	31 (46.3)	

The most important reason for non-enrolment of girls was their need for the care of their siblings in the family (74.6 per cent) followed by poor economic condition of family (61.2 per cent), no lady teachers in school (46.3 per cent) and their need for household work (44.8 per cent). It seems that due to poor economic conditions the elders, male and female both, have to go out to work and earn and, therefore, the responsibility of looking-after the infants and toddlers rests on the young school going age girls. They have also to undertake routine household work in the absence of their elders. It is, however, to be noted that a sizeable proportion of the respondents also felt inhibited in sending their daughters to school in the absence of lady teachers.

As for the reasons for non-enrolment of boys is concerned it was found that again it is the poor economic condition of the family which discourages sending of boys to school. A large majority of the respondents maintained that they were needed for the family occupation (90.7 per cent) and their poor economic condition (88.4 per cent) does not permit them to send their children to school and lose direct or indirect earnings.

The other reasons indicating their attitude towards education include 'child lack interest in education' (17.9 per cent for girls, 16.3 per cent for boys) and 'No utility of education' (13.4 per cent for girls, 11.6 per cent for boys).

Regularity in Attendance

The respondents were asked whether those of their children who were enrolled in schools were regular in attending their class? The respondents reported that out of 112 boys and 82 girls enrolled in schools 92 boys and 45 girls were regular. Thus, as compared to 82.1 per cent of the boys only 54.9 per cent of the enrolled girls were reported as regular in their schools.

Table 4 : CASTE-WISE AND SEX-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF REGULAR AND IRREGULAR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL IN THE TEN SELECTED VILLAGES

Caste	Boys (N=112)		Girls (N=82)		Total (N=194)	
	Regular	Irre- gular	Regular	Irre- gular	Regular	Irre- gular
General	15 (100.0)	-	8 (47.1)	9 (52.9)	23 (71.9)	9 (28.1)
Scheduled Castes	26 (68.4)	12 (31.6)	11 (42.3)	15 (57.7)	37 (57.8)	27 (42.2)
Other Backward Castes	15 (93.8)	1 (6.2)	13 (92.9)	1 (7.1)	28 (93.3)	2 (6.7)
Muslims	36 (83.8)	7 (16.2)	13 (52.0)	12 (48.0)	49 (72.1)	19 (27.9)
TOTAL	92 (82.1)	20 (17.9)	45 (54.9)	37 (45.1)	137 (70.6)	57 (29.4)

From Table 4 we find that about 71 per cent of the total children enrolled (boys and girls both) were reported as regular, i.e. attending school for 21 days or more in a month. The proportion of regular girls was, however,

significantly low. The highest proportion of the regular girls belong to the Other Backward Castes (92.9 per cent) and the lowest to the Scheduled Castes (42.3 per cent). All the boys belonging to the General castes followed by about 94 per cent of the other Backward Castes were reported as regular. The percentage of regular Muslim boys and those belonging to the Scheduled Castes was significantly higher than those of the girls of the same groups of families.

The respondents were further enquired about the number of days their children had attended the school during the last month. The details of the caste-wise responses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 : CASTE AND NUMBER OF DAYS CHILDREN ATTENDED SCHOOL LAST MONTH IN TEN SELECTED VILLAGES

Caste	No. of days attended School							
	Boys				Girls			
	11-15	16-20	21+	Total	11-15	16-20	21+	Total
General	-	-	15 (100.0)	15 (5.8)	1 (47.1)	8 (47.1)	8 (47.1)	17
Scheduled Castes	-	12 (31.6)	26 (68.4)	38	5 (19.2)	10 (38.5)	11 (42.3)	26
Other Backward Castes	-	1 (6.2)	15 (93.8)	16	-	1 (7.1)	13 (92.9)	14
Muslims	1 (2.3)	6 (14.0)	36 (83.7)	43	1 (4.0)	11 (44.0)	13 (52.0)	25
TOTAL.	1 (0.9)	19 (16.9)	92 (82.2)	112	7 (8.5)	30 (36.6)	45 (54.9)	82

Among the boys belonging to the Scheduled Castes 31.6 per cent were irregular who attended their school from 16 to 20 days in the last month. Among the Muslim boys 16.3 per cent were reported as irregular who had attended their school from 11 to 20 days during the last month.

Among the girls 52.9 per cent of the General Castes, 57.7 per cent of the Scheduled Castes and 48 per cent of Muslims had attended their school from 11 to 20 days during the last month. The proportion of irregular girls belonging to the Other Backward Castes was lowest, i.e. 7.1 per cent.

A further question in relation to the irregular students was asked to explore about their activities during their absence from school. The question was 'what do they do if they don't attend their school?' The analysis of the data has been done for irregular boys and girls separately and on Caste basis. The data is presented in Table 6.

For the irregular girls only the activities were reported in which they remained engage during their absence from School. The most important activity covering 94.6 per cent of such girls was the domestic work while the remaining 5.4 per cent were generally engaged in looking-after their siblings during the absence of their mothers.

Most of the irregular boys (75.0 per cent) remained engaged in agriculture related activities and another 5.0 per cent looked-after their cattles during their absence from school. A significant percentage of irregular boys, however,

do not engage themselves in any activity (20.0 per cent) and just waste their time in playing with other children.

Table 6 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN AND THEIR ACTIVITIES WHEN THEY DON'T ATTEND SCHOOL

Activities	Caste									
	General		S.C.		O.B.C.		Muslims		Total	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Domestic Work	-	9	-	13	-	1	-	12	-	35
		(100.0)		(86.7)		(100.0)		(100.0)		(94.6)
Look after cattle	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
			(8.3)						(5.0)	
Care of Siblings	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
				(13.3)						(5.4)
Agriculture Related Work	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	6	-	15
			(75.0)					(85.7)		(75.0)
Engagement in Remunerative Work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Does Nothing, Just play	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	4	-
			(16.7)		(100.0)		(14.7)		(20.0)	
TOTAL	-	9	12	15	1	1	7	12	20	37

Drop-Outs

After enrolment and regularity in attendance in school we probed about the children who had left the school without completing their studies. The data is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 : SEX-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN WHO DROPPED OUT AND WHO WERE NEVER ENROLLED IN SCHOOL IN THE TEN SELECTED VILLAGES

Sex	No. of Children Dropped-Out	No. of Children Never Enrolled	Total Children Not Enrolled at Present
Boys	29 (67.4)	14 (32.6)	43
Girls	48 (71.6)	19 (28.4)	67
TOTAL	77 (70.0)	33 (30.0)	110

Out of a total of 110 children in selected 100 households who were at present out of schools 70.0 per cent had joined a school earlier but left it without completing their studies. The remaining 30 per cent children had never joined a school. The percentage of drop-outs among girls was slightly higher (71.6 per cent) than among boys (67.4 per cent). A further analysis of the data indicate that the highest percentage of children leave their studies in Class II which gradually declines in Classes III, IV and V. In Table 8 we present a detailed data on caste-wise and class-wise distribution of drop-outs among boys and girls.

We find that a significantly larger percentage of children in all the caste categories, except the Scheduled Castes, had left their studies in Class II. Among the Scheduled Castes drop-outs a larger percentage had left studies in Classes III and IV.

Table 8 : CASTE-WISE AND CLASS-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN WHO DROPPED-OUT OF SCHOOL IN TEN SELECTED VILLAGES

Caste	Class in which Dropped					Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	
<u>Boys</u>						
General	-	1	-	-	-	1 (3.5)
Scheduled Castes	-	2	3	5	-	10 (34.5)
O.B.C.	-	-	1	-	-	1 (3.5)
Muslims	1	10	2	1	3	17 (5.9) (58.8) (11.8) (5.9) (17.6) (58.5)
TOTAL	1	13	6	6	3	29 (3.4) (44.8) (20.7) (20.7) (10.4)
<u>Girls</u>						
General	1	1	1	1	1	5 (20.0) (20.0) (20.0) (20.0) (20.0) (10.4)
Scheduled Castes	5	4	5	3	2	19 (26.3) (21.1) (26.3) (15.8) (10.5) (39.6)
O.B.C.	-	1	1	-	-	2 (50.0) (50.0) (4.2)
Muslims	4	7	5	3	3	22 (18.2) (31.8) (22.7) (13.6) (13.6) (45.8)
TOTAL	10	13	12	7	6	48 (20.8) (27.1) (25.0) (14.6) (12.5)
<u>TOTAL CHILDREN</u>						
General	1	2	1	1	1	6 (16.7) (33.3) (16.7) (16.7) (16.7) (7.8)
Scheduled Castes	5	6	8	8	2	29 (17.2) (20.7) (27.6) (27.6) (6.9) (37.7)
O.B.C.	-	1	2	-	-	3 (33.3) (66.7) (3.9)
Muslims	5	17	7	4	6	39 (12.8) (43.6) (17.9) (10.3) (15.4) (50.6)
TOTAL	11	26	18	13	9	77 (14.3) (33.8) (23.4) (16.9) (11.7)

The data regarding drop-outs among boys and girls shows that about 45 per cent of drop-out boys as against 27 per cent of girls had left their studies in Class II. The percentage among girls drop-outs was 21 as against about only 3 among boys who left school from Class I. A higher proportion of girls (25.0 per cent) than boys (20.7 per cent) had left their studies from Class III. About one-fifths (20.7 per cent) of the drop-outs among boys as against 14.6 per cent among girls had left their studies in Class IV, while 10.3 per cent of boys and 12.5 per cent among girls had left their school in just the last year of the primary classes.

Half of the Scheduled Castes drop-out boys left their studies in Class IV while 30 per cent had left the school in Class III. Among the Scheduled Castes drop-out girls the percentage of those who had left their school in Class I and III was higher, i.e. 26.3 per cent each.

Among the children belonging to the Other Backward Castes who had left their studies incomplete 100.0 per cent of boys and 50 per cent of girls left in Class III. The remaining 50 per cent of the girls had dropped-out in Class II.

Among the drop-out children belonging to the General Castes 100 per cent of boys had left in Class II while 20 per cent of the girls had left their studies in each of the five classes.

About 59 per cent of the drop-out Muslim boys and 32 per cent girls had left their studies in Class II. About 23 per cent of girls as against 12 per cent of boys had left in Class III and 18 per cent of girls as against about 6 per cent of boys had left their school during the first year of their schooling.

The reasons, as explained by the respondents, for leaving the studies incomplete by the children in their families are given in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR DROP-OUT AMONG BOYS.

(Multiple Responses)

Reasons	Caste					Total (N=29)
	General (N=1)	S.C. (N=10)	O.B.C. (N=1)	Muslims (N=17)		
Inability to bear School expenses	1 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	29 (100.0)	
Earning to improve family's economic condition	1 (100.0)	10 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	16 (94.1)	28 (96.3)	
No utility of school education	-	6 (60.0)	-	4 (23.5)	10 (34.5)	
Child's lack of Interest	1 (100.0)	3 (30.0)	-	9 (52.9)	13 (44.7)	
Harsh behaviour of Teacher	-	2 (20.0)	-	7 (41.2)	9 (31.0)	
Irregular/Uncommitted Teacher	-	2 (20.0)	-	5 (29.4)	7 (24.1)	

A total of 29 boys belonging to the families of the respondents had dropped-out from schools. Among them 17 belong to Muslim, 10 to the Scheduled Castes and one each to the General and Other Backward Castes.

The reasons for drop-out reflect the poor economic conditions of the families as all the respondents expressed their inability to bear school related expenses while 96.3 per cent maintained that the boys had to be engaged in gainful employment, to improve the family's economic conditions. There were also some education and school related reasons in leaving the studies incomplete. The education related reasons included 'Child's lack of Interest' and 'No utility of School Education.' The responses related to about 45 per cent and 35 per cent of drop-out children mentioned the two reasons respectively. Among the school related reasons were 'Harsh behaviour of Teachers' and 'Irregular and Uncommitted Teachers' which were mention by the respondents in relation to about 45 per cent and 31 per cent of drop-out boys.

In Table 10 we present the reasons for leaving the studies incomplete by girls belonging to the families of respondents.

Like the reasons given for leaving the studies incomplete by boys the reasons for dropping-out of schools by girls indicate economic compulsions as a major cause. The reasons for dropping-out of girls indicate that almost all

Table 10 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR DROP-OUT AMONG GIRLS.

(Multiple Responses)

Reasons	Caste					Total (N=48)
	General (N=5)	S.C. (N=19)	D.B.C. (N=2)	Muslims (N=22)		
Inability to bear School expenses	4 (80.0)	18 (94.7)	2 (100.0)	21 (95.5)	45 (93.8)	
Domestic Work	5 (100.0)	18 (94.7)	2 (100.0)	22 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	
Looking after Siblings	5 (100.0)	18 (94.7)	2 (100.0)	22 (100.0)	47 (97.9)	
Opposition in family over sending of young girls to school	-	2 (10.5)	-	1 (4.5)	3 (6.3)	
No lady teachers in School	3 (60.0)	9 (47.4)	1 (50.0)	10 (45.5)	23 (47.9)	
Teacher's indifferent attitude	2 (40.0)	3 (15.8)	-	-	5 (10.4)	
Irregular/Uncommitted Teacher	4 (80.0)	10 (52.6)	1 (50.0)	2 (9.1)	17 (35.4)	
No utility of school education	-	6 (31.6)	-	-	6 (12.5)	

the respondents mentioned 'Inability of bear school expenses', 'Domestic work' and 'Looking-after siblings.' The reasons indicate poor economic conditions of the households, irrespective of their caste or religious background. The elder ladies in these households go out of their houses to work and in their absence the responsibility of the routine household work becomes that of the young school-going age girls.

The other important reasons were school related. The reason behind drop-out of about 48 per cent of girls was 'No lady teachers in School' while in case of about 35 per cent of drop-out girls it was also due to 'Irregular/Uncommitted teachers' which discouraged them to continue their studies in school.

As stated earlier a total of 110 children (43 boys and 67 girls) were not enrolled in schools. They belong to 54 of the 100 families selected for interview of their heads. All the respondents replied positively when they were asked whether they 'would like to send their non-school going children to school and see that he/she completes studies?'

The next question that was asked related to the conditions under which it will be possible for them to (a) enrol their non-school going children; (b) see that regularity of their children is maintained in attending the school; and (c) see that the children complete their school education. Their conditions are presented in Table 11.

The significant conditions mentioned by the respondents for the enrolment of their non-school going children were : (i) Free supply of books, stationery and uniform and stipend to all children belonging to the poor families (57.4 per cent); (ii) dedicated and regular teachers/adequate behaviour of teachers/teachers with good manners (27.8 per cent); (iii) Education must have practical utility/technical education and subject of home-science for girls (25.9 per cent); (iv)

Table 11 : RESPONDENTS' CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN WOULD BE POSSIBLE

(Multiple Responses)

Conditions	For Enrolment (N=54)	Regularity in Attend- (N=54)	Completing Education (N=54)
School at convenient distance	6 (11.1)	6 (11.1)	5 (9.3)
Free supply of books, stationery & uniform and stipend to children of poor families	31 (57.4)	23 (42.6)	1 (1.9)
Dedicated and Regular Teachers/ Adequate behaviour of Teachers/ Teachers with good manners	15 (27.8)	16 (29.6)	4 (7.4)
School must have some lady Teachers	5 (9.3)	9 (16.7)	1 (1.9)
Education must have some practical utility/technical education and Home Science for girls	14 (25.9)	15 (27.8)	50 (92.6)
School timing & holiday pattern should match the routine life in village	-	3 (5.6)	1 (1.9)
Introduce play-way method of teaching in early classes/teaching through recreational activities	8 (14.8)	20 (37.0)	5 (9.3)
Separate School for girls	10 (18.5)	3 (5.6)	2 (3.7)
Facility of learning Urdu/Availability of Urdu Teachers	11 (20.3)	15 (27.8)	12 (22.2)

Facility of learnign Urdu/availability of Urdu teachers (20.3 per cent); and (v) Separate school for girls (18.5 per cent). Among the major conditions expressed by the respondents were : one, related to their weak economic condition for which

they demanded free supply of learning material as well as uniform for school going children; two, conditions related to the school, i.e. dedicated and regular teachers with good manners and facility of learning Urdu; the rest of the two conditions were related to the policy with regard to the primary education; i.e. education should have practical utility for which technical education even in primary classes was suggested and separate schools for girls.

As for maintaining regularity in attendance the major conditions expressed by the respondents included : (i) free supply of learning material, uniform and stipend to children of poor families (42.6 per cent); (ii) play-way method of teaching in early classes/teaching through recreational activities (37.0 per cent); (iii) dedicated and regular teachers with good manners (29.6 per cent); (iv) education should have some practical utility (27.8 per cent); and (v) facility of learning Urdu (27.8 per cent). For regularity in attendance a larger proportion of the respondents wanted the teaching in lower classes be through play-way method/recreational activities as compared to the percentage of respondents laying this condition for enrolment of children. The percentage of those demanding facility of teaching of Urdu as condition for regularity in attendance of their children also increased to 27.8 as against 20.3 per cent of respondents putting this condition for enrolment of their children.

The most important condition that may make it possible for them to see that their children complete studies was that the education must have some practical utility/technical education and home science courses for girls. This condition was emphasized by 92.6 per cent of the respondents followed by 22.2 per cent saying that the school should have facilities for learning urdu and teachers must be available in schools to teach this language.

The next question put to the respondent was that 'Is any of your school going child/girl getting any assistance from school?' Out of the 194 children enrolled in school 85.1 per cent were reportedly getting some assistance while 14.9 per cent were not because they were enrolled in private schools. The respondents identified two kinds of assistance that their children were getting : the children studying in Junior Basic School (85.1 per cent) were getting 3 Kgs. wheat per month in place of mid-day meal. Although there were general complaints from parents, participants in the focus group discussions and the teachers that the distribution of wheat had been very irregular, and was generally distributed once in three months, and the quantity lost due to non-distribution was not compensated. Despite this serious shortcoming in the scheme teachers as well as gram sabha members feel the scheme has made an impact on atleast the enrolment of children.

Another assistance that about 30.0 per cent of the students were getting was the stipend @ Rs.12.00 per month. All the Scheduled Caste children studying in Junior Basic Schools were getting the stipend while 10 per cent of the children belonging OBC and 7 per cent of the Muslims were also getting this assistance. The data is presented in Table 12.

Table 12 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN GETTING ASSISTANCE FROM THEIR SCHOOL IN THE TEN SELECTED VILLAGES

(Multiple Responses)

Type of Assistance	Caste					Total (N=194)
	General (N=32)	S.C. (N=64)	O.B.C. (N=30)	Muslims (N=68)		
Stipend (Rs.12 p.m.)	-	50 (78.1)	3 (10.0)	5 (7.4)	58 (29.9)	
3 Kgs. Wheat p.m.	23 (71.9)	50 (78.1)	30 (100.0)	62 (91.2)	165 (85.1)	
None (Studying in Private Schools)	9 (28.1)	14 (21.8)	-	6 (8.8)	29 (14.9)	

Stress on Education of Son/Daughter

The respondents were enquired about their attitude towards the schooling of their children by asking 'on whose schooling you put more stress?' The options to this question were 'on daughters' schooling/sons'/both.'

A larger percentage of the respondents (46.0 per cent) stressed on the schooling of sons and daughters both while 37.0 per cent of the sample maintained their stress was on the schooling of sons. Only 4.0 per cent of the respondents stressed on the schooling of daughters. A significant proportion of the sample (13.0 per cent) added a new option 'None' which reflect their apathetic attitude towards the education system itself which they probably do not consider useful in the present socio-economic conditions.

The caste-wise distribution of responses are presented in Table 13.

Table 13 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES STRESSING SCHOOLING OF CHILDREN

Caste	Stress on the Schooling of					Total
	Daughters	Sons	Both	None		
General	2 (15.4)	2 (15.4)	8 (61.5)	1 (7.7)		13
Scheduled Castes	-	18 (51.4)	12 (34.3)	5 (14.3)		35
Other Backward Castes	1 (8.3)	3 (25.0)	8 (66.7)	-		12
Muslims	1 (2.5)	14 (35.0)	18 (45.0)	7 (17.5)		40
TOTAL	4 (4.0)	37 (37.0)	46 (46.0)	13 (13.0)		100

The caste-wise distribution of responses indicate that two-thirds of the respondents belonging to the Other Backward Castes and 61.5 per cent of the General castes maintained that they put equal stress on the schooling of sons and daughters both. As compared to them, 45.0 per cent of the Muslim respondents held this view. More than half of the Scheduled Castes respondents (51.4 per cent) and 35.0 per cent of the Muslims were stressing for the schooling of sons only. A significant response from 17.5 per cent of the Muslims and 14.3 per cent of the Scheduled Castes was that they do not stress on the schooling of either the daughters or the sons. A large percentage of respondents belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Muslims preferred schooling of sons only. A sizeable section among the two groups was also averse to school education of their children.

As mentioned earlier 83.0 per cent of the respondents had stressed on the schooling of either their sons alone or sons and daughters both. We enquired about their reasons for stress on schooling of sons. In Table 14 we present the same.

The stress on schooling of sons was due to the fact that they were considered bread earners for the family (100.0 per cent) as well as for themselves (98.8 per cent). Nearly two-thirds of the respondents believed that their sons will maintain them in their old age. The same proportion of the sample also felt education of sons enhances the prestige and

Table 14 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR REASONS FOR STRESSING SCHOOLING OF THEIR SONS

(Multiple Responses)

Reasons	Caste				
	General (N=10)	S.C. (N=30)	O.B.C. (N=11)	Muslims (N=32)	Total (N=83)
He is to earn his bread	10 (100.0)	29 (96.7)	11 (100.0)	32 (100.0)	82 (98.8)
He has to add to Family's Income	10 (100.0)	30 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	32 (100.0)	83 (100.0)
He has to maintain parents in old age	6 (60.0)	23 (76.7)	6 (54.5)	19 (59.4)	54 (65.1)
His Education enhances status of the family	6 (60.0)	20 (66.7)	6 (54.5)	22 (68.8)	54 (65.1)
Community, give prime importance to Sons' Education	4 (40.0)	11 (36.7)	2 (18.2)	10 (31.3)	27 (32.5)
No daughter	-	3 (10.0)	1 (9.1)	5 (15.6)	9 (10.8)

status of the family while about one-third of the respondents were following only the customs of the community which gives prime importance to sons' education.

The caste-wise differences in the stress for son's schooling indicate that a higher percentage of the respondents belonging to the Scheduled Castes considered the son's schooling as a measure of social security for them during their old age and that a higher proportion of Muslims and Scheduled Castes respondents stressed on the schooling of

sons because they believed the son's education enhances prestige and status of the family.

Further, 37 per cent of the respondents had stressed on schooling of sons only. They were, therefore, asked about the reasons for not stressing on schooling of their daughters as well. In Table 15 we present their multiple responses in this regard. It was found that all the respondents thought that the responsibility for arranging the means of livelihood rests on husband and the daughters have to depend on her spouse for all of her requirements. Next, 97.3 per cent of

Table 15 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR REASONS FOR NOT STRESSING ON SCHOOLING OF THEIR DAUGHTERS

(Multiple Responses)

Reasons	Caste				
	General (N=2)	S.C. (N=18)	O.B.C. (N=3)	Muslims (N=14)	Total* (N=37)
Marriage is the 'be-all & end-all' in daughter's life	2	17	3	14	36
(100.0) (94.4) (100.0) (100.0) (97.3)					
Daughter depends on her spouse for her livelihood	2	18	3	14	37
(100.0) (100.0) (100.0) (100.0) (100.0)					
Difficult to digest contents of education	-	15	2	12	29
		(83.3)	(66.7)	(85.7)	(78.4)
Daughter's education does not add to status of family	2	11	1	10	24
(100.0) (61.1) (33.3) (71.4) (64.9)					
A suitable match for educated daughter is problematic	-	7	1	5	13
		(38.9)	(33.3)	(35.7)	(35.1)
No daughter	-	3	1	5	9
		(16.7)	(33.3)	(35.7)	(24.3)

*N = Respondents who stressed on Schooling of sons only.

the respondents also supported the above contention by saying that "Marriage is the 'be-all and, end-all' in daughter's life." This, however, indicate that the parents consider marriage of their daughters as the sole aim and that marriage is treated as a culmination of daughter's career.

About three-fourths of the respondents also felt that it was difficult for their daughters to digest contents of education. This reason goes against the abilities of their daughters which they probably consider inferior to their son's capabilities. Since the respondents consider their daughters' permanent home was that of their spouse's they felt that schooling of daughters does not add to the status of the family. About 65 per cent of the respondents subscribed to this view. About one-thirds also said that to find out a suitable match for an educated daughter is difficult and problematic and, therefore, it is better if they remain illiterate. We did not find any significant differences in reasons on the caste basis.

Only 4 per cent of the respondents stressed on the schooling of only daughters while 46 per cent had maintained equal emphasis on the schooling of sons and daughters both. Thus, 50 per cent of the sample had stressed on the schooling of daughters. In Table 16 we present the caste-wise distribution of respondents and their reasons for giving importance to daughter's education.

The Table 16 shows that all the respondents felt that education makes girls self-reliant and confident; 82 per cent also felt it increases employment opportunities; 58 per cent maintained that by educating daughters will ensure education

Table 16 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR REASONS FOR IMPORTANCE TO DAUGHTER'S EDUCATION

(Multiple Responses)

Reasons	Caste				Total (N=50)
	General (N=10)	SC (N=12)	OBC (N=9)	Muslims (N=19)	
Educated girls remain self-reliant and confident	10 (100.0)	12 (100.0)	9 (100.0)	19 (100.0)	50 (100.0)
Increases employment opportunities	6 (60.0)	12 (100.0)	6 (66.7)	17 (89.5)	41 (82.0)
Educated daughter can get higher bride price/Mehar	2 (20.0)	3 (25.0)	4 (44.4)	10 (52.6)	19 (38.0)
Lesser amount of dowry for educated girl	1 (10.0)	4 (33.3)	4 (44.4)	9 (47.4)	18 (36.0)
Ensure education for further generations	7 (70.0)	9 (75.0)	4 (44.4)	9 (47.4)	29 (58.0)
Education of girl can improve social status of family	1 (10.0)	3 (25.0)	1 (11.1)	3 (15.8)	8 (16.0)
Education makes girls conscious of their legal rights in the society	4 (40.0)	5 (41.7)	2 (22.2)	3 (15.8)	14 (28.0)
It prepares them for decision making in all walks of life	8 (80.0)	9 (75.0)	4 (44.4)	5 (26.3)	26 (52.0)
It brings health consciousness	4 (40.0)	-	1 (11.1)	2 (10.5)	7 (14.0)
Education can hike age of marriage	1 (10.0)	-	-	-	1 (2.0)
No Son	3 (30.0)	4 (33.3)	2 (22.2)	1 (5.3)	10 (20.0)

among children of the next generation; and, 52 per cent felt schooling will prepare them for decision making in every walk of life.

Caste-wise, all the respondents belonging to different groups maintained that education makes girls self-reliant and confident; all the respondents belong to the Scheduled Castes and about 90 per cent of Muslims felt it increases employment opportunities; 75 per cent of SC and 70 per cent of those belonging to the higher castes said that it will ensure education for the next generation; 80 per cent of the High Castes and 75 per cent of those belonging to Scheduled Castes thought education of girls prepares them for decision making in all walks of life, such as in the family, panchayats and legislatures. They may also be prepared for leadership role in the society.

Desire for Change in Present Education System

The respondents were asked whether they wanted any change to be brought about in the present education system of the school. Three-fourths (74 per cent) of them replied in 'yes'. The highest proportion of them belonged to the high castes (84.6 per cent) followed by those belonging to the Other Backward Castes (83.3 per cent), Muslims (72.5 per cent) and the Scheduled Castes (68.6 per cent) (Table 17).

Table 17 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING CHANGE IN THE PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

Caste	Desire change		
	Yes	No	Total
General	11(84.6)	2(15.4)	13
Scheduled Caste	24(68.6)	11(31.4)	35
Other Backward Caste	10(83.3)	2(16.7)	12
Muslims	29(72.5)	11(27.5)	40
TOTAL	74(74.0)	26(26.0)	100

Those desiring change to be brought about in the present education system were probed further and asked to specify the changes they desire. Their multiple responses are presented in Table 18. It shows that 35.1 per cent of them wanted the education must have practical utility which helps them in their occupations; 32.4 per cent felt vocational and technical education was more important and necessary; 25.7 per cent wanted the education system should have some mechanism of immediate economic returns; 23 per cent wanted the education should be imparted through recreation and play; and 9.5 per cent wanted emphasis on practical education than only through books.

Table 18 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHANGES IN THE PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM
 (Multiple Responses)

Type of Change Desired	Caste				Total (N=74)
	General (N=11)	S.C. (N=24)	O.B.C. (N=10)	Muslims (N=29)	
Education must have practical utility	2 (18.2)	7 (29.2)	4 (40.0)	13 (44.8)	26 (35.1)
Emphasis on practical than only bookish education	1 (9.1)	2 (8.3)	3 (30.0)	1 (3.4)	7 (9.5)
Education through recreation and play	5 (45.5)	7 (29.2)	1 (10.0)	4 (13.8)	17 (23.0)
Vocational and Technical Education	3 (27.3)	7 (29.2)	3 (30.0)	11 (37.9)	24 (32.4)
Education system should have some immediate economic returns	6 (54.5)	-	4 (40.0)	9 (31.0)	19 (25.7)

Thus, it seems a majority of the respondents desiring change in the present education system had in their mind that the existing system of 'education through books' is of little use and, therefore, most of their replies centred around the idea that it should be practical in nature and have utility in the occupations of their children. It seems they were seriously concerned about their poor economic conditions and, therefore, wanted immediate returns from the education ignoring the fact that education upto only primary level has very little scope for it.

Caste-wise analysis of responses shows that a larger percentage of Muslim and Other Backward Castes respondents desired that the education must have practical utility and that vocational and technical education is more important for their children. The responses of those belonging to the Scheduled Castes followed a similar pattern. A majority of the respondents from the high castes felt the education system should have some immediate economic returns while 45.5 per cent of them desired the education should be imparted through recreational and play-way method.

Another question related to the earlier one was "do you want any change to be brought about in the present curriculum?" A total of 31 per cent of the respondents replied in affirmative. Caste-wise, they included 23 per cent of the High Castes; 23 per cent of the Scheduled Castes; 17 per cent of the Other Backward Castes; and, 45 per cent of the Muslims.

They were asked to specify the changes that they wanted to be introduced in the curriculum. In Table 19 we find that about 26 per cent of the respondents wanted the curriculum should include chapters on festivals of different communities and states; about 23 per cent each suggested chapters on administrative functioning at different levels and teaching of Urdu language; about 19 per cent of each wanted some chapters on Health care and places of pilgrimage of different religions while about 13 per cent of each felt

that chapters providing knowledge about new agricultural machines, tools, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides and on general knowledge and new scientific inventions will be useful.

Table 19 : CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING CHANGES IN THE PRESENT CURRICULUM

(Multiple Responses)

Curriculum should include include topics related to	Caste					Total (N=31)
	General (N=3)	SC (N=8)	OBC (N=2)	Muslims (N=18)		
Nationalism & Heroes of Freedom Movement	-	1 (12.5)	-	2 (11.1)	3 (9.7)	
Knowledge about new machines seeds, fertilizers & pesticides for agriculture	-	1 (12.5)	1 (50.0)	2 (11.1)	4 (12.9)	
Administrative Functioning at different levels	1 (33.3)	3 (37.5)	-	3 (16.7)	7 (22.6)	
General knowledge/New Scientific Inventions	-	-	-	4 (22.2)	4 (12.9)	
Health Care programmes	1 (33.3)	1 (12.5)	1 (50.0)	3 (16.7)	6 (19.4)	
Teaching of Urdu	2 (66.7)	2 (25.0)	1 (50.0)	2 (11.1)	7 (22.6)	
Places of pilgrimage of different religions	1 (33.3)	2 (25.0)	-	3 (16.7)	6 (19.4)	
Festivals of different Communities and States	1 (33.3)	3 (37.5)	1 (50.0)	3 (16.7)	8 (25.8)	

The caste-wise variations in the responses suggesting modifications of the curriculum by including topics/subjects in the courses of studies indicate that of those suggesting

change/modifications in the curriculum belonging to higher castes two-thirds (66.7 per cent) wanted teaching of urdu and one-thirds each inclusion of chapters on administrative functioning at different levels; health care programmes; on places of pilgrimage; and, festivals of different communities and states. Among the scheduled castes 37.5 per cent each suggested topics related to administrative functioning at different levels and festivals of different communities and states while 25 per cent of each wanted teaching of urdu and chapters on places of pilgrimage of different religions. Among the Other Backward Castes respondents 50 per cent of each wanted chapters providing knowledge about agricultural machines/tools, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides; health care programmes; festivals of different communities and states; and, teaching of urdu language. Among the Muslim respondents 22.2 per cent wanted inclusion of chapters on general knowledge/new scientific inventions while 16.7 per cent of each suggested chapters on administrative functioning at different levels; health care programmes; places of pilgrimage of different religions; and, festivals of different communities and states.

Desire for Social Support for Girls' Education

The respondents were asked 'do you want any change to be brought about in the society which will encourage the girls'

to go for education?" The purpose behind this question was to find whether : (a) the respondents were in favour of girls' education and they want a social movement for spreading education among girls without which girls in a large number may not be able to get an opportunity for educational and social advancement; and (b) they feel that the present socio-cultural environment is not encouraging the girls to go for education. The Table 20 presents their responses.

Table 20 : DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING CHANGE IN SOCIETY IN FAVOUR OF GIRLS EDUCATION

Caste	Desire change		
	Yes	No	Total
General	7(53.8)	6(46.2)	13
Scheduled Castes	17(48.6)	18(51.4)	35
Other Backward Castes	5(41.7)	7(58.3)	12
Muslims	13(32.5)	27(67.5)	40
TOTAL	42(42.0)	58(58.0)	100

We find that 42 per cent of the respondents expressed their desire for such a change in the society. Caste-wise, about 54 per cent of the respondents belonging to the higher castes followed by about 49 per cent of the Scheduled Castes,

42 per cent of the Other Backward Castes and 33 per cent of Muslims expressed their desire for a change in the society in favour of girls' education.

Those who thought that changes be brought about in the society which encourages the girls to go for education were asked to specify the changes they would prefer. The Table 21 presents their suggestions in this regard.

Table 21: CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHANGES IN THE SOCIETY IN FAVOUR OF GIRLS EDUCATION

(Multiple Responses)

Type of Changes Desired	Caste				Total (N=42)
	General S.C. (N=7)	O.B.C. (N=17)	Muslims (N=5)	Total (N=13)	
Change in socio-cultural environment in favour of girls and their education through mass movement involving important persons of all communities	5 (71.4)	16 (94.1)	3 (60.0)	6 (46.2)	30 (71.4)
Equal status to Boys and Girls will help them get equal opportunities in the society	3 (42.9)	4 (23.5)	1 (20.0)	4 (30.8)	12 (28.6)
Practices such as Purdah and early marriage should be discouraged so that Girls get an opportunity to go for education	2 (28.6)	8 (47.1)	2 (40.0)	11 (84.6)	23 (54.8)
People have to be convinced that educated girls have many advantages: will get a better spouse/may study further and be able to get a respectable job/can look-after the family in a better way	-	14 (82.3)	1 (20.0)	5 (38.5)	20 (47.6)

About 71 per cent of the respondents felt that there was a need for a mass movement in support of education for girls. They thought the existing socio-cultural environment was not sufficiently in favour of girls' education due to certain prevailing prejudices or 'circumstances such as for the educated girls the parents face more difficulty in finding a suitable match/since they have to live with their husbands after marriage the responsibility of maintaining the family is that of their husbands/educated sons enhance the prestige of their parents/only sons have to look-after their parents in old age/poor parents can hardly afford the cost of education of their sons, it is, therefore, not possible to spend on girls' education.

A very high proportion of the Scheduled Castes respondents (94.1 per cent) followed by 71.4 per cent of the high castes, 60 per cent of the Other Backward Castes, and 46.2 per cent of Muslims held the above view.

About 55 per cent of the respondents thought that Purdah system and early marriage discouraged sending of girls to school. They were of the view that most of the parents do not like to send even their 7-8 years old girls to school. Their stand becomes more rigid if the school is located outside their village. A sizeable section of the people also do not like sending girls to a co-educational school. Those holding such a view included 84.6 per cent of Muslims, 47.1

per cent of the Scheduled Castes, 40 per cent of Other Backward Castes and 28.6 per cent of the high caste respondents.

About 48 per cent of the respondents felt that the people have to be convinced about the advantages of education among girls. The major advantages about which the people have to be convinced included : (a) the educated girls were likely to get a better spouse and for such girls the parents may have to arrange only a reasonable Dahaz/the Mehar amount for such girls may be higher. Caste-wise, a significantly higher proportion of the Scheduled Castes (82.3 per cent) respondents held this view while 38.5 per cent of Muslim and 20 per cent of the Other Backward Castes respondents suggested this measure.

About 29 per cent of the sample desiring a change to be brought about in the society in favour of girls' education suggested that the boys and girls both should get equal status in their families. If they are given equal treatment both will have equal opportunities. Thus, the people have to be convinced that their daughters are in no way inferior to their sons and both needs equal attention. Caste-wise, 42.9 per cent of the respondents belonging to high castes, 30.8 per cent to Muslim, 23.5 per cent to the Scheduled Castes and 20 per cent to the other Backward Castes suggested this change to be brought about in the outlook of the people.

Supportive Mechanism for Promoting Education Among Children

The main objective of the present study is to have perceptions, opinions and suggestions of the parents regarding specific problems in the education of girls in general and the children from the disadvantaged groups in particular. The disadvantaged groups, especially from the perspective of education, in the state of Uttar Pradesh, have been identified as Scheduled Castes, Muslims and Scheduled Tribes.

Thus, the last question in the Interview Schedule for parents included was 'What more supportive mechanism you are expecting which can promote education for your children?' This question was asked from all the respondents in relation to girls education and from the respondents belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslims for education among their children in particular. Their responses are presented in Table 22.

Out of a total sample of 100 respondents 91 expected the support for promoting education among girls. They related to mainly to three aspects : (a) the supply of certain materials; (b) curriculum; and (c) teachers. About 40 per cent of the respondents were expecting the schools will have female teachers while 33 per cent felt training in handicrafts, tailoring, embroidery and knitting will promote education among girls. Employment oriented education using

Table 22 : DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS EXPECTING SUPPORT FOR PROMOTING EDUCATION AMONG CHILDREN

(Multiple Responses)

Expecting Support	For Education of:		
	Girls (N=91)	SC Childr- en (N=35)	Muslim Children (N=40)
Free supply of books and Stationery	14(15.4)	18(51.4)	12(30.0)
Stipend to all girls in School	11(12.1)	-	5(12.5)
Female Teachers in Schools	36(39.6)	9(25.7)	18(45.0)
Training in handicrafts, tailoring, embroidery and knitting	30(33.0)	9(25.7)	12(30.0)
Free supply of uniform to poor children	9(9.9)	12(34.3)	17(42.5)
Awards to meritorious Students	12(13.2)	2(5.7)	8(20.0)
Employment oriented education	18(19.8)	9(25.7)	8(20.0)
Use of Play-way method of teaching	5(5.5)	-	6(15.0)
Appointment of Urdu Teachers	8(8.8)	-	15(37.5)

local raw materials was considered helpful by 19.8 per cent of respondents in the spread of education among girls while 15.4 expected free supply of books and stationery may be helpful; 13.2 per cent of them thought awards to maritorious girl students can promote education among them while 12.1 per cent of the respondents payment of stipend to all school going girls may help them significantly.

As regards the promotion of education among children belonging to the Scheduled Castes 51.4 per cent of respondents from the same castes thought free supply of books and stationery can promote education among their children. The other measures mentioned by them included : free supply of school uniform to poor children (34.3 per cent); training in tailoring, handicrafts, embroidery and knitting (25.7 per cent); appointment of female teachers in schools (25.7 per cent); and, employment oriented education (25.7 per cent).

The measures which can promote education among children belonging to Muslim families as mentioned by the respondents of this community included : appointment of female teachers in schools (45.0 per cent); free supply of school uniform to poor children (42.5 per cent); appointment of Urdu teachers in schools (37.5 per cent); training in handicrafts, tailoring, embroidery and knitting (30.0 per cent); free supply of books and stationery (30.0 per cent); awards to meritorious students (20.0 per cent); and, employment oriented education (20.0 per cent).

CHAPTER IV

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

As per the guidelines of the Social Assessment Studies on the education of Children belonging to the socially disadvantaged group in general and girls in particular Focus Group Discussion was conducted in all the ten selected villages of the district. The participants were identified prior to the conduct of the discussion. They also included some females as it was thought that their opinions/suggestion may be useful particularly in relation to girls education. Persons of different age-groups, educational and occupational background were included in the group. All of them had school going age children in their families. They were either enrolled in the school, enrolled earlier but dropped-out or never enrolled. The selection of the participants was made on the basis of the same criteria which was adopted for selecting the concerned village, e.g. persons from Scheduled Castes were selected if the village was selected on this criteria and the Muslim participants were selected if the village was selected on the basis of their sizeable population. The discussion was conducted in a peaceful atmosphere and effort was made that other persons do not interfere during this exercise.

The village-wise details of the participants of each group are mentioned along with the summary of discussion. The participants in the discussions were advised to speak on their own behalf and also on behalf of their community and village as a whole as some of them were also village/community leaders. The issues placed for discussion of the groups are listed in Appendix 1. The summary of the discussions is presented in the following pages.

1. VILLAGE NEWARA

Focus group discussion was held in village Newara of block Mawai. The block was selected since it had a high proportion of Muslims in its population and the village was also selected on the same consideration. Therefore, all the ten participants in the discussion were Muslims. The discussion was held in the village on October 25, 1996 and lasted for three and a half hours from 10.00 AM.

The background of the participants in the discussion is given in Table 1.

Table 1 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE NEWARA

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Nishat Ali	M	35	Muslim	Inter	Cultivation	Block Pramukh
Rushda Hashmi	F	46	Muslim	M.A.	Service	Teacher
Sharafat Husain	M	55	Muslim	H.S.	Service	Teacher
Munnawar Khan	M	46	Muslim	B.A.	Cultivation	Member Panchayat
Afsar Jahan	F	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Housewife	Parent
Mohd. Muslahuddin	M	50	Muslim	H.S.	Service	Teacher
Fatima Khatoon	F	30	Muslim	VIIIth	Housewife	Parent
Savitul Nisan	F	55	Muslim	-	Housewife	Parent
Mohd. Sarwar	M	55	Muslim	VIIIth	Cultivation	Parent
Liaquat Ali Khan	M	32	Muslim	Inter	Service	Teacher

The group comprised six males and four females. Four of them were teachers, one of the participants was block Pramukh while one was member of the Gram Sabha. The summary of the discussion is given below.

Results of Discussion

The first question put to the participants was 'do you consider education as imparted by schools to be important for

your children?" Most of the participants agreed that school education was important for their children. Shri Muslahuddin and Shri Munnawar Khan further elaborated that it was important because education helps the children to stand on their own feet and it also helps them get respect in the society. Shri Liaquat Ali Khan and Smt. Fatima Khatoon further added that education is as important for girls as it is for boys. Educated children do better in every field and school education forms a basis for further studies. On the other hand, Shri Nishat Ali said educated girl gets a spouse from better family and they are also able to manage their family in a better way. Mohd. Muslahuddin, however, said that many of the parents usually stress on the education of boys, because they have to work and run the family. Girls, however, do not get jobs in the village even after schooling. In addition parents are too poor which prevent them to send their daughters to school as they are required to help them in household activities. On this there was considerable discussion. In the end the group suggested that the government should run an effective scheme for removing illiteracy among the adults. The parents of the school-going age children should be familiarized with the benefits of education. When enquired whether of those enrolled in schools boys were more regular or girls, Shri Sharafat Hussain and Shri Liaquat Ali replied that in comparison to girls, boys were more regular. This was because parents engage the girls in household work and do not encourage them to go to school regularly.

The next issue was "Why are girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys?" Smt. Rushda Hashmi was of the view that poverty prevents parents from continuing education of their girls even if they initially enrol them. However, Shri Munnaur Khan was of the view that there is no need to educate girls. They do not have to do jobs and when they grow up they have to look after their families. Smt. Fatima Khatoon and Mohd. Sarwar added that the girls in their village do the entire household work, they prepare the food, look after siblings and collect fodder for animals. There was a considerable discussion on this issue. Shri Nishat Ali said that poverty prevented the parents from sending their children, particularly girls to school for five long years. Shri Liaquat Ali also agreed to this. Smt. Fatima Khatoon said that she regularly sends her daughters to school without any let-ups. But, sometimes they themselves do not like to go when they see girls from other families were not going to school. They, therefore, also want to avoid and enjoy. She thought that many a girls in the village who had been irregular in school eventually dropped-out. All the people in the group said that they had not taken their girls out of school. But if girls are withdrawn by some parents it is because they are needed to do household work, help their mothers in cooking meals and collect fodder for animals.

The participants in the discussion suggested that the parents should be familiarized with the social benefits of education for girls. They should be convinced that there is

no difference between daughters and sons and that they must give chance to girls to complete at least primary education. They should also not put the burden of looking after siblings on their school going age children. The responsibility of household work for girls must be avoided during school hours. This would encourage the children in general and girls in particular to go to school.

Issue number 4 was 'the specific problems that the children of identified socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled Castes and Muslims) face in terms of schooling'. Shri Nishat Ali said that the main problem in the schools was that the teachers were not able to give proper attention to all the children. This was because the children were large in number. Smt. Hashmi was of the opinion that the children belonging to economically poor families were generally weak in the class because due to their involvement in household work they generally do not complete their home work and, therefore, lag behind others. Further, their illiterate parents were also not capable of helping their in completing their assignment given in the class. But Mohd. Sarwar did not agree with this. He said that although children help out at home but the work is not so much that they cannot do their school homework. Hence, this is no excuse for irregularity or their poor performance in the class. Generally, in the school, he thought, children from poor families were not given due attention equal to those belonging to better-off families. Another problem, that Smt. Savitul Nisan,

mentioned was delay in supply of study material. Poverty prevented the parents of the socially disadvantaged group to provide books and stationery to their children in time. She said this was a serious problem which hindered the study of their children.

To solve the problem of non-attention of teachers the participants in the discussion suggested parent-teacher meetings while for delay in supply of books they suggested the government should supply the material to all children belonging to identified socially disadvantaged group.

Issue number 5 raised for discussion was "What are the problems girls of the group face ,in terms of teachers' attitude and peer group attitude?" To this Smt. Afsar Jahan said that the teachers were not able to give proper attention to all the children. This was not because of any consideration of caste or religion but due to large number of students in the school. The other participants in the discussion agreed with this observation.

The next issue (no.7) for discussion was "What are the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities?" In this context Smt. Fatima Khatoon said that the school had many shortcomings. She said that although the school was in the village but it was situated at one end of the village and was far-off for the people who lived at the other end. The road to the school was also bad and became water-logged during the rainy

season. Thus the children find it difficult to reach the school during such period. There was also lack of a toilet and there was no safe source of drinking water in the school which posed a serious difficulty. The school did not have a play ground so the children, especially the girls were not able to play. The participants, particularly Shri Sharafat Hussain, Shri Muslahuddin, Smt. Hashmi were very critical about the lack of such basic facilities in the school situated in such a large village. Shri Nishat Ali who is Block Pramukh promised to look into the matter and try to solve the problems that the children were facing.

The next issue related to the existence of welfare schemes for school going children (No.8). Mohd. Sarwar informed that the children belonging to the socially disadvantaged groups get a stipend of Rs.12 per month and the entire amount of stipend for a year is paid at the end of the school session. Shri Munnawar Khan added that there was also a provision of 3 Kgs. wheat per month per student. A number of participants were, however, critical about the operational aspect of the scheme. They said that the wheat was not distributed regularly due to the lax attitude of the supplier. Often they get the wheat after 2-3 months. Smt. Hashmi clarified that stipend to all Scheduled Castes children was given but among Muslim students only some were getting. Shri Sharafat Hussain suggested that the Pradhan should have control over the supplier so that wheat can be distributed regularly.

The next issue taken up (No.9) was very important. It related to the expectations of the participants from the school system. Shri Munnawar Khan said that the school should have sufficient number of teachers so that every child gets their proper attention and that each class must have a separate teacher. He also said that the school should create interest for studies in the child so that he/she is encouraged to study further. For this, he emphasized that the school should have one room for each class, the teachers should be regular and trained. Shri Nishat Ali suggested supply of adequate quantity of mid-day meals to the children. Smt. Afsar Jahan expected the school to provide study material to the children belonging to the poor families. Shri Liaquat Ali Khan suggested that the school should have a play ground and games material. Smt. Hashmi desired that all children should get equal treatment by teachers in the school irrespective of their socio-economic background. Shri Muslahuddin thought the school curriculum should include teaching of English also while Shri Liaquat Ali felt that introduction of technical training in schools will enhance their utility. Mohd. Sarwar said that the holiday pattern must match the agricultural season as at that time children are required to help their parents. Shri Sharafat Hussain felt all the basic amenities should be available in the school and that the location of the school should be easily approachable. Everybody present in the discussion supported these views.

The next issue for discussion was 'What are the ways to overcome the constraints? To this Smt. Fatima Khatoon suggested that the best way to solve most of the day to day problems was to talk about them with the teachers of the school. Mohd. Muslauddin supported this view point and added that if parents take interest in the school they together with teachers can create an environment in the village in favour of school education of children in general and girls in particular. Together, they can solve many problems of the school and improve its working. Parents can also influence Gram Sabha to take interest in the working of the school. They can also help in maintaining the school building properly.

The last question proposed for the discussion was about the ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints. Shri Sharafat Hussain and Shri Sarwar said that it was important that the parents are impressed by the leaders of the village and of their own community not to engage their children in household work and in the care of younger children at least during school timings. They were of the view that the community leaders can make the parents understand the importance of school education for girls. They could thus convince the parents that it was in their interest to send their daughters to school rather than deprive them on the pretext of their own poverty or their help and support required in household activities.

2. VILLAGE KONDRA

Focus Group Discussion was held in village Kondra of block Mawai. Since the block was selected on the basis of its high percentage of Muslim population the village was also selected on the same criteria. Therefore, all the ten participants in the discussion also belong to the same community. The discussion held on October 26, 1996 at 10.30 AM lasted for about four and a half hours. The background of the participants in the discussion is given in Table 2.

Table 2 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE KONDRA

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Anishul Nishan	F	35	Muslim (BC)	IIInd	Housewife	Up-Pradhan
Abdul Majeed	M	55	Muslim (BC)	Vth	Cultivation	Panchayat Member
Nanhey	M	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Cultivation	Parent
Shafi Ahmd. Khan	M	35	Muslim (BC)	VIII	Service	Teacher
Abdul Qayum	M	58	Muslim (BC)	VIII	Cultivation	Parent
Shakeel	M	45	Muslim	Vth	Cultivation	Parent
Jameel	M	40	Muslim	-	Trade	Parent
Chunni	F	42	Muslim (BC)	-	Labour	Parent
Asia Khatoon	F	35	Muslim	-	Housewife	Parent
Aneesun Nisan	F	40	Muslim	-	Housewife	Parent

As is evident the group consisted of six males and four females. One of them was Up-Pradhan of the Gram Sabha while one was the member of the Gram Sabha. The summary of the discussion is given below.

Results of Discussion

The first question put to the participants was 'do you feel education as imparted by schools to be important for your children?' Most of them replied positively. The female participants in general and Smt. Chunni in particular stressed the importance of education by saying that if the children in the family can read and write, they can at least read the letters that they get and they do not have to go to others for this purpose. They can also convey important message through letters to their near and dear ones. They can read posters, hoardings and even newspapers. In addition an educated mother can look after her family in a better way. Shri Abdul Majeed was of the view that education is equally important for both boys and girls. On this, there was considerable discussion. Smt. Anishul Nishan said that a number of parents had no problem in sending 6-7 year old daughter but do not like to send their daughters of above that age to the school. For them, observance of social customs was more important. Shri Shafi Ahmad Khan observed

that there are some parents who are conservative and do not like to send their daughters to school. But, Shri Nanhey pointed out it was not because they were conservative, it is the fear from the unsocial elements of the village. He further said that environment of the village is not good. Some of the young boys, who do nothing, tease girls. This happened a number of times. This prevents parents from sending their daughters to school. But, even the uneducated parents want to educate their daughters, in spite of the above difficulty. A number of participants particularly Smt. Anesun Nisan supported his view. Shri Abdul Qayum specified that parents prefer to enroll both boys and girls, but boys are naughty and do not listen to their parents and do not do the household work they are told. So parents prefer sending them to school regularly. However, girls are sensitive, they help their mothers in the household work and so often miss their school. Ultimately they become irregular and stop going to school. Shri Shakeel differed with Shri Qayum on this point and said that most of the parents were sending both their sons and daughters to school regularly so that they can get 3 Kg. wheat per child per month. Shri Abdul Majeed, however, agreed to the observations of Shri Abdul Qayum that generally boys were more regular in their attendance. This is because the girls help in the household work like cooking and washing, and looking after siblings. When there is a festival or occasion in the family they are stopped from going to school as their help is needed in the household work. Smt. Anesun Nisan said that in the absence

of good clothes girls feel shy in attending the school whereas boys can wear even torn clothes but not girls. So poverty of parents hinders the attendance of girls. To this, Smt. Nisan suggested that the government must provide free uniforms at least once a year to all the school going girls.

To the next issue for discussion 'Why are girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys?' Smt. Asia Khatoon, while initiating the discussion observed that ours is a conservative society and we have to abide by the social customs and norms. Although the views were changing, but it may take some time. Some parents still feel that school education for girls was not important. At the most they teach Quran, theology and urdu at their homes. Since adequate facility for teaching of urdu was not available in the school they had no attraction of the school education. After one or two years they withdraw them for studying Quran and Urdu at home. Shri Jameel, however, added that this does not affect the girls of 6-7 years age who study in some primary classes. This affects the older girls of 8-10 years who go in for higher classes. Smt. Khatoon continued and said that in Muslim society the girls from about 10 years have to observe Purdah, and that they cannot move about freely. On this Shri Abdul Qayum intervened and said that some parents do want to educate their daughters till at least class 10th but their village school does not have higher classes and they are against sending their daughters to far flung schools. Smt. Asia Khatoon said that girls are needed

to do the household work like washing, cooking, etc. and so they are not able to attend school. However, Smt. Aneesum Nisan disagreed and said that because of only the household work parents do not prevent girls from going to school. She added that poverty is a major cause of non-enrolment and drop-out. She said that parents cannot afford to buy books and stationery for their children. At this point Smt. Chunni intervened and said that for the study of boys, parents take loans because a boy will earn in future and add to the family income. But for girls' education parents don't make any such effort as they think that girls will go away after their marriage. On this issue there was a heated discussion with Shri Nanhey contradicting and saying that now-a-days parents consider the education of girls equally important. Instead, Smt. Anishul Nishan said that girls are more interested than boys in studying. They do better in school but the circumstances were not very favourable for their education. Poverty of parents prevents their education while for the sake of face-saving social custom is cited as a reason for withdrawing girls from school. As a solution to this problem most of the parents suggested that the government must run special schemes for the education of girls and all school going girls must be provided free uniforms and stipend.

Issue number 4 was about the specific problems that the children of the socially disadvantaged groups (SC and Muslims) face in terms of schooling. Shri Jameel said that the biggest problems the children of the disadvantaged group

faced was poverty of their parents due to which importance to their education is not given and they get study material quite late. The second problem was lack of adequate number of teachers. Since there was no lady teacher the girls feel shy and the parents feel reluctant to send their daughters to school. There is also lack of sitting facilities in the school due to which children have to carry their own tat on which they sit in the school. Thus, all children sit separately due to which the gap between the children of high castes and low castes increases automatically.

To solve these problems the female participants especially Smt. Chunni suggested increase in number of teachers, free uniform and stipend for girls of poor families, lady teachers in school, government help for education of girls like free books and stationery. Some participants also suggested that the school must also have a library with story books which are written in simple language.

The next issue (No.7) for discussion was 'What are the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities?' To this Shri Shafi Ahmed Khan said that the school does not have a proper play ground, only little open space has been left in front of the school for playing which is very inadequate and unsafe. During rainy season the road to the school gets water-logged and so the children cannot go to school. There is also lack of a

toilet and safe drinking water in the school. Smt. Chunni suggested that the school should be within a distance of 1 km. and must have a play ground. This play ground must be surrounded by a brick wall so that it is safe. The school must also have a toilet and safe drinking water at the earliest. Shri Shakeel added that the funds that are sanctioned for development of the school must be given to either the school head master or to the Gram Pradhan so that their optimum use can be made possible.

The next issue related to the existence of welfare schemes for school going children (No.8). Shri Abdul Majeed said that although they were not fully aware of all the schemes that were being run by the government, they knew that 3 kg. wheat per month per child was given. Scheduled Caste children were getting a stipend of Rs.12 per month. The Muslim children were also going to get stipend but as yet none of them had got it. However, Shri Jameel complained that the attitude of the dealer who distributed the wheat was not good and he did not weigh the grain he distributed. He used a can to distribute the wheat which was often only 2 - 2.5 kg. instead of the stipulated 3 kg.

To solve the above problems Smt. Chunni suggested that the quantity of wheat must be increased from 3 kg. to 5 kg. and it must be distributed by the school teachers. The amount of stipend must also be increased from Rs.12 to Rs.25 per month and that all Muslim children should also get it.

The next issue was very important and related to the expectations of participants from the school system. Smt. Anishul Nishan said that there must be one teacher for 25 students and the school should have more female teachers than males. Smt. Asia Khatoon expected the school to have a decent building. The village contractors should be avoided while giving contract for construction as he uses a lot of sand and being local he is able to influence people not to complain against the poor quality construction. Shri Nanhey suggested that the school must have a play ground and sufficient games material. Shri Shafi Ahmad Khan suggested that the school must have one map each of the district, state and India so that the children have knowledge of geography. Smt. Chunni observed that children of poor families especially the girls must get free uniforms and free books and stationery. Shri Abdul Qayum felt that the school building must also be maintained properly and white washed at least once in two years and there must also be a provision for health check-ups of children at least twice a year. Shri Jameel and Smt. Asea Khatoon felt that teaching of English and Urdu will attract more children to school and that teachers must be provided for these subjects. They were supported by most of the participants.

Issue number 10 was "what are the ways to overcome the constraints they experience?" To this, Shri Shafi Ahmad Khan replied that there must be regular inspections in the school.

The SDI (Sub-Divisional Inspector of Schools) must visit the school at least once a month, must talk to the students and their parents about their problems and must check the school records properly.

The last question in the schedule related to the ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints. Shri Abdul Qayum and Smt. Chunni observed that some of the elders in the village are respected by most of the people. If they seriously try to impress upon parents to send their children to school, to give equal importance to education for boys and girls and avoid engaging girls in household work during school hours, it will certainly have good effect on at least some of the parents.

The village elders can built an environment in favour of school education. If some enrol their children others will also follow during the course of time. Shri Jameel felt if elders keep a check on who has not enrolled his children in school or who were detaining their girls for household work the parents may realize their mistake. With such efforts of elders for a few days in a month the environment is bound to change in the village. The village elders should, therefore, be approached and requested by the education officials for their active involvement in this activity. Every one of the participants supported Shri Qayum and Smt. Chunni's observations and suggestions.

3. VILLAGE JINHAULI

The Block Banki in the district was selected on the criteria of having significant proportion of the Muslim population. The same criteria was applied in selecting the two villages from the Block for Focus Group Discussion. The village Jinhaulı was one of them. The Focus Group Discussion was held in the village on October 28, 1996 which lasted for about four and a half hour from 11:0 AM. Thus, all the participants in the discussion belong to this segment of population. The background of participants is given in Table 3.

Table 3 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE JINHAULI

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Smt. Sharifun Nisan	F	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Housewife	Gram Pradhan
Smt. Janatul Nisan	F	30	Muslim (BC)	-	Weaver	Parent
Smt. Shakira Bano	F	45	Muslim (BC)	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Waheedan	F	50	Muslim (BC)	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Fahmeed Jahan	F	40	Muslim	-	Housewife	Parent
Mohd. Shakir	M	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Trade	Panchayat Member
Mohd. Saeed	M	45	Muslim (BC)	-	Labour	Parent
Zia Uddin	M	40	Muslim (BC)	BMS	Medical Practitioner	Parent
Niaz Ahmad	M	42	Muslim (BC)	-	Labour	Parent
Shamsuddin	M	45	Muslim (BC)	-	Trade	Parent

As is evident from the above table that half of the participants in the group were females, nine members belonging to Backward Castes as most of the families residing in the village belong to this group. Four participants were active in village affairs as they were associated with Gram Sabha. Among them were three female participants. One of the females was Gram Pradhan of Jinhauli.

Results of Discussion

The first issue raised for discussion was 'do you feel education as imparted by schools to be important for your children?' Initiating the discussion Shri Niaz Ahmad emphasized the importance of school education for children. Smt. Sharifun Nisan, however, said that there was no doubt that school education was important for children. The parents also realise its importance but due to a number of reasons they were not showing interest in it. She explained that due to poverty, illiteracy and some social customs some of them were reluctant to send their children to school. Supporting the point raised by Smt. Sharifun another female participant, Smt. Waheedan said that due to poverty some parents feel that instead of sending their children to school they should help them by looking after the household work or by working during agricultural season and contributing to family earnings. Since most of the parents were illiterate

they think only about the immediate gains. Shri Mohd. Saeed said that since girls are not supposed to take-up jobs in offices they have to be proficient in household work which will help them in their future also - when they get married and live with husband and in-laws. Besides, study of Quran and theology was important for them which was not possible in school. Some women in the village who have studied Quran teach many of the girls without charging any fees. Shri Mohd. Shakeel said that some boys of the village also go to a Maulvi Saheb in the nearby village and study Quran and theology and Urdu. Shri Shamsuddin pointed out that some of the Muslim parents do not prefer to send their 8-9 year old girls to school not because they have to observe purdah but because they don't want their girls to mix-up with boys. At this point Smt. Shakira Bano intervened and argued in support of school education for children in general and girls in particular. She was emotional in her assertion that had we got a chance to study in a school our conditions would have been different. We would not have been so ignorant about every thing that we hear from others. At least we would have realised the importance of education. It is true that every child cannot go to college or get a job of Babu (clerk) but a few may get this. She was supported in her assertions by Shri Zia Uddin, Smt. Fahmeed Jahan and Smt. Shakira Bano.

In relation to the next issue, i.e. why are the girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys, Shri Shamsuddin said that it was due to poverty of parents, Smt.

Fahmeed Jahan said the basic reason was illiteracy among parents due to which they do not realize importance of school education for girls while Shri Zia Uddin mentioned the practice of purdah as an important reason for withdrawing girls from school. Smt. Sharifun Nisan said that one of the important reason was that the girls themselves lose interest in school when they see that many of the girls of their adjoining families were not attending the school. The village environment and the negative attitude of other girls towards school education was also responsible for the early drop-out among girls. After they stop going to school they generally look-after the household work, take care of their younger siblings and the cattles. Due to poverty and illiteracy the parents also do not insist on continuation of their school education.

Smt. Shakira Bano suggested that parents should feel responsible for the household work and should do it themselves during school hours. She further suggested that parents have to be convinced that education for girls was as important as for boys and that the marriage settlement may be easier for educated girls. Shri Ziauddin suggested that a vigorous drive needs to be launched to convince illiterate parents about the desirability and utility of education among girls.

The next question (No.4) related to the 'specific problems the children of socially disadvantaged group (SC and

Muslim) face in terms of schooling.' Smt. Sharifun Nisan mentioned lack of adequate facility for the study of Urdu language. She complained that even if the school had an urdu teacher he was unable to devote time for this subject as he is required to teach other subjects also. He hardly gets time to concentrate on teaching of this language. Due to pressure of other subjects the urdu teacher also lose interest in his primary subject. Shri Ziauddin pointed out that if Urdu is also taught in the school properly the children will find it easier to study theology and Quran. Shri Mohd. Shakeel and Shri Niaz Ahmad also supported the points raised by Smt. Sharifun Nisan and Shri Zia Uddin. Shri Shamsuddin pointed out that there were only three teachers for about 200 children in the school. The teachers cannot pay attention to such a large number of students. The results is that only good students or children belonging to economically better-off families are able to get teacher's attention. Those belonging to socially disadvantaged group are also generally economically poor and weak in their studies. They need more attention of teachers but they are not adequately attended.

Smt. Waheedan said that due to poverty parents find it difficult to arrange proper clothes for their school going girls. The girls in poor/shabby clothes feel shy in school. They, therefore, try to remain absent from school on one or the other pretext. The parent-do realize the actual reason for their daughters' lack of interest in school but are

helpless in this regard. Also, children belonging to such families get their books and stationery very late. During the intervening period they try not to attend school. By the time they get the books some lessons are already covered in the class. They, therefore, become weak and start losing interest in the class. Smt. Janatul Nisan suggested that the study material to at least girls of the poor families should be supplied by the school. Shri Shamsuddin suggested that all boys and girls belonging to economically poor families should be given study material by the school. He thought there is no other possible solution to this problem. Shri Zia Uddin suggested that the government should introduce a scheme under which parents should deposit some amount in the Post Office every month for the purpose of purchasing books, stationery and clothes for their school going children. In the beginning of the school session their deposits should be returned to them. An amount equivalent to their savings as subsidy should also be given to them. This will encourage poor parents to save some amount for the studies of their children. Shri Mohd. Shakeel suggested that the number of teachers in the school should be increased so that all students, particularly those who are weak in studies are able to get adequate attention and support of teachers.

The next issue that was discussed quite at length was related to 'the problems that the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities' (No.7). Smt. Wahidan said that there was no proper road

leading to school. Children have to walk through narrow and uneven kutcha lane. During the rainy season this lane remains under water. Shri Shamsuddin complained of lack of toilet in the school which causes hardship to girls. Shri Saeed mentioned the problem of drinking water as there was no such facility in the school. Shri Mohd. Shakeel complained that there was neither a play ground nor game's material in the school.

Shri Niaz Ahmad suggested that an India Mark II handpump should be installed immediately and Kharanja should be laid in the lane leading to the school.

As regards the schemes that were in operation for the school going children (No.8) Smt. Shakira Bano said that education in the school was free while Smt. Waheedan said that all children belonging to the Scheduled Castes get stipend @ Rs.12 per month. She also informed that stipend is given to some of the Muslim children also. Shri Niaz Ahmad informed that all school going children were also given wheat @ 3 kg. per month.

Shri Mohd. Shakeel complained that wheat is not given regularly. Some time its supply is skiped for even three months. He suggested that either the wheat should be supplied regularly or the scheme should be abolished and in its place mid-day meal should be supplied in the school. He also suggested that like the Scheduled Castes children all the Muslim students should also be given stipend.

The next issue for discussion was 'What are their expectations from the school system?' Shri Mohd. Saeed desired the number of teacher should reasonably match the number of students. Smt. Sharifun Nisan wanted the school should have one room for each class. She also informed that the panchayat members have also written to the department in this regard. The Panchayat will extend support if it is asked for. Mohd. Saeed wanted the school should have some facilities for recreational activities which he thought will attract more children to join school. Smt. Fahmeed Jahan wanted the provision of mid-day meal in the school which will encourage parents for enrolment of their children and the students for remaining regular in the school. Smt. Waheedan felt free supply of books through school will help the poor parents financially and the children from such families will get their study material in time. A number of participants, particularly Smt. Sareefun Nisan, Smt. Janatul Nisan and Shri Niyaz Ahmed wanted the school holidays should be scheduled in such a manner that children remain free during peak agricultural season.

The last issue for discussion was 'in what ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints?' Shri Mohd. Shakeel, Shri Mohd. Saeed, Smt. Fahmeed Jahan and Smt. Waheedan expressed that leaders should try to convince the parents belonging to their own community that education for girls was equally essential and the girls should not be engaged in household work during school hour and that they

must be sent to school. The community leaders should consider it as their responsibility to check in the beginning of the school session that girls not enrolled have been enrolled in school. They should also check whether they were attending the school regularly.

Smt. Shareefun Nisan, Smt. Janatul Nisan, Shri Mohd. Niaz and Shri Shamsuddin also felt that influential community leaders can create an atmosphere in the village in favour of girls education. They can also impress upon parents that school education was important for boys and girls equally and they should not burden school going girls by the responsibility of looking after their siblings, particularly during school timings.

4. VILLAGE MOHAMMADPUR CHOWKI

The Focus Group Discussion was conducted in village Mohammadpur Chowki of Block Banki on October 29, 1996 which lasted for about four and a half hour from 10:0 AM. Since this block was selected mainly for the study of the attitudes of one of the socially disadvantaged groups, i.e. Muslim towards school education of children the same criteria was applied in selecting the village which had a significant proportion of the Muslim population. Thus, all the

participants in the Focus Group Discussion were belonging to this segment of the population. The background of participants is given in Table 4.

Table 4 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE MOHAMMADPUR CHOWKI

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Raees Jan	M	38	Muslim (BC)	-	Cycle Mech.	Parent
Abdul Sattar	M	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Cultivation	Pradhan
Hafiz Mohd. Zafar Sadiq	M	28	Muslim (BC)	Xth	Service	Teacher
Mohd. Raes	M	42	Muslim (BC)	VIII	Service	Parent
Basharat Ali	M	39	Muslim (BC)	Vth	Service	Parent
Mohd. Afzal	M	25	Muslim (BC)	XII	Service	Parent
Kallu	M	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Labour	Parent
Smt. Khurshid Begum	F	38	Muslim	-	Housewife	Parent
Smt. Reshma	F	30	Muslim	-	Housewife	Parent
Smt. Qaiser Jahan	F	28	Muslim (BC)	XII	Service	Teacher

The group for discussion consisted of seven males and three females. Since the majority of the Muslims living in the village belong to the Backward Castes, the participants included 8 members from amongst the these Castes. One of them was village Pradhan while two were teacher by profession.

Results of Discussion

With regard to the first issue for discussion, i.e. 'do you feel education as imparted by schools to be important for your children' most of the participants including Shri Basharat Ali, Smt. Qaiser Jahan and Mohd. Afzal said that school education was very important for children. They argued that it will help them in improving their conditions of living; in becoming more informed about different programmes and schemes meant for the welfare of people; in improving the economic conditions of their families. They, however, felt that there were some parents who had not realized the importance of school education and, therefore, were not so enthusiastic about it.

Smt. Reshma and Mohd. Raees said that school education was equally important for boys and girls but Abdul Sattar felt that there was no utility of education for girls as even the educated boys were unable to secure any job. He also said that due to this reason many people were not taking interest in school education for girls and, were not sending their daughters to school. He further added that study of Quran, theology and urdu was more important for girls than school education.

Smt. Raees Jahan, Smt. Khurshid Begum and Hafiz Mohd. Zafar felt that due to passive attitude of parents towards

girls education even those girls who were enrolled were irregular in school as they were detained by their parents for household work. Besides, those parents who had handloom engage their girls for this job. Another reason for irregular attendance of girls was mentioned by Mohd. Afzal that girls are generally engaged to look-after their cattles and arrange fodder for them.

Basharat Ali suggested the regular attendance of girls in school was important. They should, therefore, not be engaged in household activities during school timings. For this the parents will have to be convinced by their elders that school education was important for girls also.

To the second issue Mohd. Afzal said that due to social customs the parents generally withdraw their daughters from school when they think they have physically grown-up even if they are in 8-9 year age.

Smt. Khurshid Begum said that parent generally prefer to engage their daughters in household work than their sons as they think girls can shoulder the responsibility of household work in a better way than boys. Due to their support, the elder females in the economically poor families are able to undertake job and earn, particularly in families where handloom was the main source of earning. Hafiz Mohd. Zafar and Mohd. Afzal felt that more girls from economically poor families leave the school than those belonging to comparatively better-off families. Initially, they become

irregular in school as they think that helping their parents in improving earnings was more important. Their irregularity in attendance make them weak in the class and finally they lose interest in studies and leave the school.

Smt. Reshma supported by Mohd. Raees felt that the main reason of passive attitude of parents towards school education of girls was their illiteracy which results in early withdrawal of girls from school. Such parents, however, claim that due to poverty only they were not in a position to continue schooling of their daughters.

Smt. Reshma suggested that efforts should be made to literate the parents also. Mohd. Raees said that some effective programmes for improving economic conditions of people in villages may also solve this problem and change the attitude of economically poor parents in favour of girls education.

The next question for discussion related to the 'specific problems the children of socially disadvantaged group (SC and Muslim) face in terms of schooling.' Initiating the discussion Hafiz Mohd. Zafar said that the contents of the text were to some extent unfamiliar for children and there was a need to improve and make their reading interesting. He suggested that lessons on moral teaching and on the importance of harmonious relation between people based on the teachings of different religions should be added. He, however, emphasized that while preparing such

lessons care should be taken to include teachings of all religions so that children develop the feeling of respect for all religions. He also suggested that at least some lessons should be in local dialect. The point was well supported by Mohd. Raees and Smt. Qaiser Jahan.

Raees Jan said that due to poverty parents find it difficult to arrange proper clothes for their school going daughters. The books etc. for school going children are also arranged quite late. Smt. Qaiser Jahan supported this point and said that children from such families were able to get books after 2-3 months of the start of the school session.

Basharat Ali pointed out that during agricultural season or during peak handloom season children are involved in these activities due to which they are not able to do home work assigned in the class. This also results in their irregular attendance. Smt. Khurshid Begum while supporting the above point also said that since most of the parents from the economically poor background were illiterate they were also unable to help their children in completing homework assignments.

Mohd. Afzal and Abdul Sattar suggested that avenues for reasonable earnings of farmers and artisans including handloom workers should be created in the village so that the parents can free their children from household activities for attending school. In such circumstances, they will also be in a position to arrange books and adequate clothes for their

children. Smt. Khurshid Begum wanted the illiterate parents should also be made literate.

As regards the problems in understanding the course (No.6) Kallu said that use of difficult words which seems alien to children create problem in understanding the contents. Smt. Reshma pointed out that certain lessons were beyond the comprehension of children of this age group. She suggested use of simple words and incorporating of lessons keeping in view the mental level of children.

The next issue for discussion related to the problems that the school going children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities. Smt. Qaiser Jahan informed that children in general and girls in particular face problem in school due to non-availability of toilet. Raees Jan said that the hand pump installed in the school was very old and defunct since a long time. Abdul Sattar pointed out that though there was a play ground the school did not have any game's material for children.

The participants suggested a toilet should be constructed and an India Mark II handpump should be installed immediately.

With regard to existence of different schemes for school going children (No.8) all the participants were aware about the provision of stipend for all Scheduled Caste children. They also knew that some Muslim children were also getting

the same. The participants also knew that all school going children with 80 per cent attendance were getting wheat at the rate of 3 kg. per month.

Hafiz Mohd. Zafar, however, said that the distribution of wheat was not regular as normally it was given at every three months' interval.

It was suggested by Smt. Qaiser Jahan that instead of 3 kg. wheat children should be provided mid-day meal in the school. Bashrat Ali suggested that if the present scheme of wheat distribution is to continue its distribution should be arranged through the school Head Master and the Gram Pradhan.

Smt. Khurshid Begum suggested that like the Scheduled Castes children, stipend should also be paid to all the Muslim students while Hafiz Mohd. Zafar suggested that all school going girls should be paid stipend.

With regard to the next issue, i.e. what are their expectations from the school system, Mohd. Afzal said that the school building should be adequate and there should be a separate room for every class. Smt. Reshma desired the school should have adequate teachers considering the number of students. Mohd. Raees expected the school to provide mid-day meal to students and also supply books, etc. to all children. Abdul Sattar emphasized the importance of games material for making the school attractive for children. Smt. Reshma wanted the schools to observe few days holidays during peak agricultural season. Mohd. Raees suggested the regular

attendance of teachers was very important for proper functioning of the school and, therefore, there should be regular checking of their attendance.

With regard to the next issue (No.10), Mohd. Afzel, Abdul Sattar And others pointed out that the Gram Sabha can play an important role in running the school properly; in influencing parents to send their non-school going children to school; and, in convincing people that school education for girls was more important as they will have to manage their families after marriage. Educated mothers can maintain their family in a much better way. The Gram Sabha can also keep a check on the attendance of teachers. Raees Jan suggested that the Gram Sabha should also extend support in case teachers need it for the improvement in school.

The last issue for discussion was 'In what way the community can participate in overcoming the constraints?' Mohd. Raees felt that village leaders and elders should take it as their duty to impress upon parents that they must ensure that the school going children were attending their classes regularly. Raees Jan felt that due to the compulsion of poverty many parents were unable to send their children to school regularly but it was also a fact that many of them did not realize the importance of school education for their children. The village and the community leaders can play an important role in creating consciousness among them about the utility of education for their children.

Smt. Qaiser Jahan said that Gram Sabha can help economically poor parents by providing employment under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana after laying a condition that they will be given priority in the job if they commit to enrol their children in school and that they will not engage them for household work during school hours. She also suggested that parents should not entrust the responsibility of looking after younger siblings on the school going girls. They should also not be engaged in jobs for the purpose of earning.

5. VILLAGE SAHAWAR DHARAULI

Focus Group Discussion was held in village Sahawar Dharauli of Block Trivedigani. Since the block was selected on the criteria of the Scheduled Castes population the village was also selected on the same consideration. All the ten participants in the discussions, also belong to the same castes. The discussion held on October 31, 1996 lasted for about four and a half hour from about 1:20 PM. The participants in the discussion and their background is given in Table 5.

Table 5 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD
AT VILLAGE SAHAWAR DHARAUJI

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Smt. Prem Kali	F	44	SC	-	Labourer	Parent
Dhokal	M	45	SC	-	Cultivation	Member, BDC
Dukkhi Prasad	M	30	SC	-	Cultivation	Parent
Ramesh	M	28	SC	VIIth	Cultivation	Parent
Sri Ram	M	36	SC	VIIItth	Cultivation	Pradhan
Khilari	M	45	SC	Vth	Cultivation	Panchayat Member
Sukhram	M	40	SC	Xth	Cultivation	Parent
Smt. Mahanti	F	50	SC	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Ram Piyari	F	32	SC	Vth	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Nankau	M	30	SC	-	Labourer	Parent

As is evident the group consisted of seven male and three female participants. Thus, some fathers and mothers were included in the group. Five of them were active in the affairs of the village as four of them were associated with their Gram Sabha and one was member of the Block Development Committee.

Result of Discussion

The first question put to the participants was 'do you feel education as imparted by schools to be important for your children?'. Most of them responded positively by maintaining that school education was important. The female participants in general and Smt. Prem Kali in particular stressed on the point that it helps them to be good parents in future and in its absence children cannot improve their status in the society. Shri Khilari, however, pointed out that children and particularly girls are required to help their parents in household work and the girls are required to take up the responsibility of household work in their in-laws house after marriage. They have to be proficient in that area. School do not provide training for sharing such responsibilities. On this there was a considerable discussion. Shri Dukhi Ram said that education for girls and boys was equally important. He was supported by Shri Ramesh who said that in their village the trend was changing and now more parents were willing to send their daughters to schools. Shri Sri Ram argued that there was no difference between boys and girls and that both should get equal chance for their development. Finally, Shri Khilari and other suggested that schooling is important but girls should get sufficient time to look-after household work.

When it was enquired whether of those enrolled in schools boys were more regular or girls. Shri Khilari's

reply was that boys were more regular because due to household work girls do not get time to do home work and slowly they become weak in the class. This results in decline in their enthusiasm for school.

To the next issue 'why are the girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys' Shri Sukhram said that some parents who do not attach importance to girls education also want their daughters do household work and look-after younger brothers and sisters. This results in drop-out of girls from schools. Smt. Ram Piyari mentioned lack of lady teachers as an important reason whereas Smt. Mahanti added that the old values restrict education among girls as finding a suitable match for an educated girls is problematic. Smt. Ram Piyari said that economic compulsions discourage schooling of girls. The parents prefers their daughters do household or agricultural work rather than sending them to school and lose earnings. Shri Nankau supported this view point by saying that there is not enough to eat twice a day and in such conditions who can afford to lose even indirect earnings through their support and also spend money on their books and proper clothes. Shri Dukhi Prasad added another dimension to the discussion by saying that girls are not supposed to take up jobs and earn. They have to do household work and after they get married they have to shoulder the same responsibility in their in-laws house. The responsibility to earn bread and contribute to the household income is that of

boys. This generated a controversy. Smt. Mahanti argued that education was just as important for girls as for boys and girls must get opportunity to complete at least primary education. Most of the other participants agreed to the arguments of Smt. Mahanti. Smt. Ram Piyari strengthened the view by saying that girls usually do well in studies while boys were generally naughty and disinterested in studies.

The participants suggested that schools should generally be within a distance of one kilometre; that schools must have some lady teachers; stipend must be given to all girls students and a course on Home Science must be included in the studies. They thought such measures will attract girls and encourage the unwilling parents to send their daughters to school.

As regards the issue number 4, i.e. the specific problems that the children of identified socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled Castes and Muslims) face in terms of schooling Shri Dukhi Ram said language in books posed a serious problem as it was more urbanized whereas Smt. Prem Kali contested this assertion and said that language was not a problem for children as it can be understood. Shri Ramesh pointed out that most of the contents of the text books were of no use. This was supported by Shri Dhokal and Shri Sri Ram who said the story based lessons seemed alien for rural children and, therefore, there was a need that some

lessons based on special features of the district should be included in the text books. Shri Sri Ram also complained that children belonging to economically poor families do not get adequate attention of teachers. Shri Nankau supported this point. He, however, clarified that such an attitude of teachers was not based on any consideration of caste of children. Smt. Ram Piyari pointed out that due to poverty the parents belonging to the socially disadvantaged group were finding it more difficult to provide proper dress for their school going girls. Some of girls from such families absent themselves from school because of this reason only. Shri Sukh Ram pointed out that due to poverty such parents find it extremely difficult to arrange books and stationery in time for their children and the delay cause not only an hinderence in studies but also embarrassment in school. Smt. Mahanti Devi added that since parents from such group are generally illiterate and, therefore, do not realise the importance of education for their children. As a result, they do not bother much if their children do not attend school. They are particularly interested that girls should help them in the household work.

The issue No.5 raised for the discussion was "what are the problems that girls of other group face in school in terms of teachers attitude and peer group attitude?" Shri Nankau said that generally teachers attitude towards children belonging to poor families was not sympathetic and attentive.

It is not based on consideration of caste or religion. The peer group attitude was cordial which had no such feeling of economic superiority or inferiority. Others, particularly Smt. Ram Piyari, Shri Sukh Ram and Shri Ramesh agreed to the contention of Shri Nankau.

The next issue for discussion was whether the children face problems in understanding of the course. To this issue Smt. Prem Kali and some others said that they were not facing any serious problem. They, however, suggested that it will be more attractive if rural dialect is used and lessons covering some important aspects of the district are included.

The next issue (No.7) for discussion was 'what are the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities?' Smt. Ram Piyari said that the village school does not have a play ground and the children especially girls are not able to play. Smt. Prem Kali felt that the school is far from the residential locality of the village but since it is near the village not much problem is faced by children in going to school. Shri Dukhi Ram added that the road to the school was safe and the children had no difficulty in this regard. Shri Ramesh informed that the school had facilities of drinking water and toilet. Smt. Prem Kali suggested that every school should be within one kilometre, have facilities of drinking water, toilet and a play ground and a safe road leading to it. These would enable girls to attend school regularly.

The next issue related to the existence of welfare schemes for school going children. Shri Sri Ram informed that children belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Muslim families were getting stipend @ Rs.12 per month. Shri Ramesh informed that there was provision of 3 kg. wheat per student per month. A number of participants particularly, Shri Dukhi Prasad, Shri Nankau and Smt. Ram Piyari were critical about the operational aspect of the schemes. They suggested enhancement of the amount of stipend and regular distribution of wheat. They were critical that wheat was not distributed regularly and when it is distributed after two-three months they don't get the quantity of wheat due for earlier months. She also suggested that the wheat should either be distributed directly by the school teacher or in lieu mid-day meal should be provided to children in the school. This, she thought, will encourage enrolment as well as regularity in attendance.

The next very important issue (No.9) raised for discussion was that 'what were their expectations from the school system?' Smt. Prem Kali said she expected committed, regular and sufficient number of local teachers in the school. Each class should have a separate teacher. Shri Dukhi Ram wanted a decent school building and a room for each class. Shri Ramesh expected the school should have facilities for recreational activities. Shri Sri Ram

expected the mid-day meal for children in the school. Shri Khilari felt the school be within easy approach and at short distance. Shri Sukhram expected the school to supply the study material in the beginning of the session while Smt. Mahanti felt the school should have a play ground and supply of games material. Shri Nankau desired the school holidays should be according to Agricultural seasons, cultural traditions and local festivals. Smt. Prem Kali stressed on the posting of at least one lady teacher in every school so that parents feel free to send their daughters. Shri Ramesh expected appointment of teachers belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the areas having significant population of these groups.

The next issue raised for discussion was "what are the ways to overcome the constraints the parents experience?" Shri Sukhram suggested that the school with adequate facilities and an attractive building should be located within an easily approachable distance so that children in general and girls in particular do not face any difficulty in reaching there. They should also feel attracted towards their school due to its facilities and sympathetic attitude of teachers. He also suggested either higher amount of stipend for girls or financial support for arranging study material and clothes for them should be provided. Shri Ramesh added that presence of lady teachers will encourage girls to be regular in school. Other participants also supported the above suggestions.

The last issue for discussion was 'in what ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints.' The participants had only one suggestion to offer that the leaders and elders of the village and of their own community can play an important role by pressuring and convincing the parents that they must enrol their children and that boys and girls should be given equal importance as far as their education is concerned. The participants felt that their influence on the community will certainly improve the situation with regard to enrolment and help in reducing the drop-out cases.

6. VILLAGE POKHARA

The Focus Group Discussion was conducted in village Pokhara of Block Trivediganj on November 2, 1996 which lasted for about four hours from 11:00 AM. All the ten participants selected for discussion belong to the Scheduled Castes. Among them four were females and the rest were males. The group included three active persons of the village as they were members of the Gram Sabha and one school teacher by profession. All of them had school-going age children. The list of participants and their background is given in Table 6.

Table 6 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE POKHARA

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Babu	M	40	SC	-	Washerman	Parent
Garibey Prasad	M	42	SC	-	Cultivation	Panchayat Member
Lalita Prasad	M	45	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Gaya Baksh	M	40	SC	-	Labour	Parent
Ram Bahadur	M	42	SC	VIIith	Agri. Labour	Up-Pradhan
Sant Ram	M	30	SC	XIIth	Service	Teacher
Smt. Sitapat	F	37	SC	-	Labour	Parent
Smt. Poonam	F	25	SC	IIIrd	Housewife	Parent
Smt. Dhara Devi	F	38	SC	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Phul Jhara	F	35	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent

Result of Discussion

The first issue raised for discussion was whether they feel education as imparted by schools to be important for their children?. Initiating the discussion Shri Babu said that school education was very important for children as any improvement in their conditions depend on education; their

future depends on schooling; and, that they can benefit more from various government programmes if they are educated. Shri Ram Bahadur, however, pointed out that though school education was important for their children many parents are not convinced of its utility. Their poor economic conditions discourage them from sending their children to school. They feel that their young boys can contribute to the family earnings by working during agricultural seasons and the girls may help by doing household work and leaving their mothers free to work and earn. Shri Bahadur was supported by Shri Gaya Baksh, Shri Sant Ram and Smt. Poonam. They further added that the village social environment was such which does not convince many parents about the importance of school education. They want immediate monetary gains. Smt. Dhera Devi supported the above points and added that many parents feel that since girls have to manage their own home after marriage they must learn how to do that. Though all of them agreed that school education was important for both boys and girls but the socio-psychological and economic background did not encourage many parents to send their children particularly girls to school. Even if they initially send them they do not take interest in their continuation. Shri Garibey Prasad, however, said that girls do not have to undertake job as their responsibility was to look after household work. They need not be necessarily sent to school. His point was opposed by most of the participants who also suggested that the thinking of people may change if consciousness about the utility of education is created among

them through a campaign by school teachers, social workers, Gram Sabha and other government agencies. Shri Sant Ram also suggested that the people may feel encouraged to send their children to school if loan and subsidies under Integrated Rural Development Programme are given to those parents on priority basis whose school going age children have passed at least Class III and are still studying in school.

To the next issue 'why are the girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys' Smt. Poonam said that it was true. She stressed that the thinking of parents has to be changed in favour of school education for girls. She further added that many parents prefer to enrol their sons than daughters as they think boys have to earn and improve family income and status while girls have to go to other family after marriage. They are generally engaged in household work with the result that even if some parents enrol their daughters they do not take interest in their schooling. Eventually, the girls become irregular in school and in many cases drop-out earlier than boys of their families. Smt. Poonam was supported by other female participants also. Shri Sant Ram who is a teacher also informed that boys were more regular in school than girls as the girls are engaged in household work while boys are generally required to help parents only during peak agricultural season. He also suggested that supply of study material and adequate stipend to all girls attending school may improve the situation. Smt. Dhara Devi, however, said that the situation was

changing and many parents were giving importance to girls education. She also suggested financial support in the form of free supply of study material and stipend for girls so that parents do not consider the schooling as a burden on them.

On the next issue (No.4) about the specific problems the children of identified socially disadvantaged group such as Scheduled Castes and Muslim face in terms of schooling the discussion was initiated by Shri Gaya Baksh who complained that teachers were irregular and usually come to the school late. They were also not paying due attention towards children belonging to socially disadvantaged and economically poor families.

Shri Lalita Prasad said that due to poor economic conditions of families belonging to this group, children have to help their parents, either directly or indirectly, to improve their earnings. It results in their irregular attendance in school. Shri Sant Ram supported this point and added that children and particularly girls belonging to the socially disadvantaged group were more irregular than those belonging to comparatively better-off families. Shri Ram Bahadur while agreeing to this point also pointed out that due to illiteracy among parents children do not get their help in completing their home work. The outcome of this draw-back is that children from these families become weak in their class. Gradually, they lose interest in studies and

feel shy in attending school. Smt. Dhara Devi said that since many parents do not consider education for girls necessary therefore on the pretext of their inability to afford proper clothes for school going girls due to poor economic conditions they do not take interest in the schooling of their daughters. Smt. Phul Jhara pointed out that due to lack of interest in education of children parents delay in arranging books and stationery for them. This is more so in the case of children belonging to the socially disadvantaged group.

To improve the working of school, Smt. Sitapat suggested strict supervision and checking of the working of school by the education department. The discrimination against children belonging to economically poor families should also be checked. Shri Gaya Baksh suggested that Gram Sabha members must take interest in this regard so that children belonging to the disadvantaged group do not feel discriminated and deprived. Shri Garibey Prasad suggested that stipend to children should be paid on the basis of economic condition of their parents irrespective of their caste or religious background. Smt. Dhara Devi while agreeing to this suggestion added that all school going girls should be given stipend irrespective of their caste background. Shri Ram Bahadur suggested that since education of children was linked with the background of parents a vigorous programme should be carried out through which parents are also educated. Such a programme will

automatically improve the educational environment of villages. Shri Sant Ram and others also supported and suggested that the literacy campaign should be carried out properly so that its achievements do not remain on paper. They should be visible in actual situation.

The next issue (No.5) for discussion was 'what are the problems girls of other group face in school in terms of teachers' attitude and peer group attitude?' Smt. Phul Jhara opined that the attitude of teachers towards children in general was not good. Even on minor mistakes children are beaten which frightens them and, therefore, they often give lame excuses for not attending the school. She was supported by Shri Lalita Prasad and Shri Babu.

As regards peer group attitude every body said they were cordial and children do not face any kind of discrimination on the basis of caste or religion. Smt. Sitapati, however, said that though the relations among all school going children were cordial but if children belonging to socially disadvantaged group go to the house of children belonging to other group to seek their help in completing home work then they are not helped. This is a common attitude of children of the other group. Shri Babu supported the observation of Smt. Satpati that sometimes it really happened.

Shri Babu suggested that there should also be at least one lady teacher in school and that all teachers should be trained and capable of handling children properly. Shri

Garibey Prasad suggested that parents of children belonging to other group should encourage their children to help their class fellows from disadvantaged group in completing their home work.

On the question 'what are the problems faced in the understanding of the course' (No.6), Shri Garibey Prasad felt that the language in the text book was easily understandable. Shri Lalita Prasad felt that the contents of the text books were also easily understandable. Other participants also supported these views.

What are the problems that the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities was the next issue for discussion (No.7). Shri Ram Bahadur observed the school should be inside the village so that girls can easily attend it without any fear of insecurity. Shri Babu pointed out that there was no toilet in the school. Shri Ram Bahadur also informed about lack of adequate drinking water facility while Shri Sant Ram pointed out that the school does not have space for play ground which he thought was very much needed for the physical development of children. Shri Ram Bahadur suggested that besides adequate covered space the school should have facilities such as safe drinking water, toilet, play ground and some sports material. He thought their availability attracts students as well as their parents.

As regards the existence and operation of different schemes for school going children (Issue No.8), Shri Sant Ram informed that all students get wheat @ 3 kg. per month and stipend to all children belonging to the Scheduled Castes and to some students belonging to Muslim families was given @ Rs.12 per month. He complained about irregular distribution of wheat. He suggested that the distribution of wheat as well as stipend should be done through the Gram Pradhan.

The next issue raised for discussion was 'what are their expectations from the school system? Shri Garibey Prasad expected one teacher per class who attend the school regularly and in time. Shri Lalita Prasad also supported this view. Shri Gaya Baksh wanted the school should have facilities for recreation. Shri Ram Bahadur preferred mid-day meal for students rather than supply of wheat. Smt. Sitapati wanted the school should be located within the village.

Shri Sant Ram desired the learning material should be made available to all students in time. Smt. Poonal expected sympathetic attitude of teachers towards all students. Smt. Dhara Devi wanted the school holidays according to agricultural season, local festivals and other cultural activities of the area. Shri Babu wanted at least one lady teacher in each school, to attract girls. Smt. Phul Jhara wanted equal treatment to children irrespective of their economic or social background.

A major suggestion was that teachers belonging to adjoining villages should be posted in the school so that they attend the school regularly. Their influence on parents will be more and they can easily convince them about the necessity of girl's education.

As regards the ways to overcome the constraints they experience (Issue No.10) Shri Sant Ram suggested establishment of an Intermediate College for girls in the nearby area. This, he thought, will encourage girls of a number of villages to complete their primary education as they will have opportunity for higher education within accessible distance.

The last issue (No.11) was 'in what ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints.' Smt. Phul Jhara suggested that community leaders should try hard to convince the parents belonging to their community about the importance of education of children and that equal opportunities should be provided for the schooling of boys and girls both. All the participants approved this suggestion as they thought the leaders/elders of different caste/religious communities had greater influence on the people belonging to their communities. They can play an important role in the spread of education among boys and girls of their communities. They can also easily impress upon parents that girls should not be engaged during school

timings for taking care of younger siblings. And, that their future should not be affected adversely for their selfish motive, i.e. taking their help in household work.

Shri Ram Bahadur also thought that village leaders should impress upon the literate/educated persons to help children in completing their home work, irrespective of their caste or economic background.

7. VILLAGE USMANPUR

Focus Group Discussion was held in village Usmanpur of block Sidhaur. The block was selected as it had a high percentage of Scheduled Castes in its population, and so the village was also selected on the same consideration. Eight of the ten participants in the discussion group belonged to this caste while the other two were Muslims as they also constituted a sizeable population in the village. The discussion was held on November 4, 1996 and lasted for about 5 hours from 11:0 AM. The background of the participants is given in Table 7.

Table 7: PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE USMANPUR

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Smt. Shivpati	F	31	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Latif	M	40	Muslim (BC)	-	Cultivation	Parent
Ranjit	M	40	SC	VIII	Agri. Labour	Parent
Smt. Kanti	F	36	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Paridin Kanaujia	M	31	SC	B.Ed.	Service	Teacher
Smt. Shila Devi	F	35	SC	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Maya Devi	F	30	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Smt. Roop Rani	F	42	SC	-	Housewife	Parent
Nankaulal	M	48	SC	Inter	Service	Teacher
Smt. Rafiq Jahan	F	30	Muslim (BC)	V	Housewife	Panchayat Member

As is evident the group consisted of four male and six female participants. Two of them were teachers while two female participants were members of the Gram Sabha. The summary of the discussion is given below.

Result of Discussion

The first question put to the participants for discussion was 'do you feel education as imparted by schools

to be important for your children?' Smt. Shivpati in agreement with the other participants said that although education was important but today the schools have become useless as they do not serve the purpose for which they were opened. This is because the teachers are not sincere, they come late to school, and when in school they do not teach at all. So, no education is imparted in schools at all, and sending children to school is waste of their time. Although all participants agreed that the school had become useless, they also observed that school education was important for their children. Shri Ranjit pointed out that education is equally important for both boys and girls. Educated boys do well in life while educated girls can also earn and support their family in times of need and crisis. On this Shri Latif added that although education is equally important for both boys and girls parents usually do not enrol girls in school. This is because they are poor and illiterate due to which they do not consider education for girls in schools so important. However, there was a strong disagreement between the participants on this issue. Shri Nankaulal along with Smt. Roop Rani and Smt. Shila Devi said that now a days parents are aware of the benefits of education for both boys and girls and want to give education to both of them equally. Smt. Rafiq Jahan added that in comparison to boys, girls are more regular in school. Due to poor economic conditions, boys go with their fathers to the fields to work and supplement family income. Thus, they are able to attend

school for only 10-12 days in a month. Smt. Kanti added that school had no attraction for children. Neither building was adequate, nor even chatai was provided for seating of children. The teachers were not taking any interest. Except reading and writing there is no practical use of school education. Due to lack of attraction in school children become irregular and ultimately drop-out. To prevent irregularity in attendance, the children should also be given some practical training which is useful for them. They should also be given books and stationery and mid-day meals in school.

To the next question 'why are girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys?' Smt. Kanti replied that due to poor economic conditions parents prefer educating boys while girls are stopped from going to school after one or two years. Smt. Shila Devi added that social customs do not discourage girls education. However, Shri Latif disagreed to this observation and said that social customs do discourage the education of girls. Most parents, Hindus and Muslims both, do not like their daughters sitting with boys. They also do not like sending girls to distant school. They prefer 8-9 year old girls to stay at home and do household work. Smt. Roop Rani observed that due to poverty girls are usually put to household work and in the care of siblings, so that the parents can go out and earn. She also agreed that many a parents do not prefer sending their daughters to school, since they feel that girls should learn household

work which will be their responsibility after they get married. They therefore, withdraw their girls from school before completing their education. Shri Nankaulal supported Smt. Rani and said that parents do consider the education for girls useless. But he added that there are some literate families in the village who were educating their daughters as they think their daughters should also become self-reliant. On this issue a long discussion ensued. Smt. Maya Devi pointed out that girls were more sincere than boys in their studies and often do much better in school.

Some of the participants in general and Smt. Shila Devi in particular suggested that the parents must be made aware of the benefits of education. The wide belief that girls need to be proficient in only household work and that spending five years in school is waste of their time has to be countered by convincing them that school education besides making them literate also help them in improving their capabilities. School going girls also learn manners and discipline which will help them run their household in a better way. Thus, they should not be withdrawn in mid-way. Shri Kanaujia suggested that to encourage poor parents to send their daughters to school the Gram Sabha should take up the responsibility of providing books and clothes to school going girls of such families. So that poor parents do not feel burdened by their schooling and continuing their studies till they complete.

Issue number 4 related to the specific problems the children of the socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled Castes and Muslims) face in terms of schooling. Shri Ranjit said that a big problem was that the teachers do not pay due attention to the weak children. In this, however, no caste consideration was involved. But, since most of the children belonging to this group were generally weak in studies they suffered most. Smt. Kanti said another problem was that due to poor economic conditions children have to help out at home and sometimes also have to do labour due to which they do not attend school regularly. Shri Praidan Kannaujia was of the view that due to illiteracy of parents, children do not get their help in completing their home work assignments and due to fear of teachers they frequently remain absent from school. The above observations were supported by most of the participants. Smt. Shila Devi added that some parents do not consider education for girls important while Smt. Roop Rani thought that some of the contents of the text book looked unfamiliar by the children.

Shri Nankaulal suggested that the teachers should be sincere and sympathetic towards the weak students. Children should not feel frightened from them and they should not hit children unnecessarily. Smt. Rafiq Jahan suggested that instead of giving home work children should be asked to complete exercises in the school itself. She also suggested the school should have adequate arrangement for teaching Urdu

and economic help must be provided to children of all poor families. The other participants in the discussion also agreed to these suggestions.

Issue number 5 raised for discussion was 'what are the problems that girls and children of other groups face in school in terms of teachers attitude and peer group attitude?' Shri Latif said that generally the teachers attitude was not good. They usually do not come on time and use harsh language with the children. However, the peer group attitude was cordial which had no feeling of economic inferiority or superiority. Others, particularly Shri Ranjit agreed with Shri Latif, and suggested that it would certainly help if the teachers came to school on time and took interest in teaching.

The next issue (No.6) for discussion was whether the children face problems in understanding the course. To this issue Smt. Kanti observed that they were not facing any serious problem. Shri Kanaujia added that no change was required in the course and books prescribed.

The next issue was '(what are the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities?' To this Smt. Maya Devi said that the school was far away from their homes. Smt. Shila Devi added that the road to the school was also not safe. Smt. Roop Rani said that non-availability of safe drinking water in school was

also a problem while Shri Nankaulal added that there was no play ground in the school. However, there was a toilet in the school and so the girls did not face much problem in this respect. The other participants supported the above observations.

To solve these problems Smt. Shivpati said that the school must be within 1 km. of the residence and the road to the school should also be safe. This will improve attendance of girls in school. The school must also have a play ground and the facility of safe drinking water. Smt. Rafiq Jahan supported these suggestions while others also approved them.

The next issue related to the existence of welfare schemes for school going children. Shri Latif said that they were aware of the schemes being run for the school going children, but added to that they were not being run properly due to which the most of them were not directly benefiting from these schemes. Shri Ranjit said that all children belonging to the socially disadvantaged groups were getting stipend while all children were getting 3 kg. wheat per month per child. Shri Kanaujia pointed out that there were serious malpractices in the distribution of wheat. The wheat given was not properly weighed and its distribution was irregular.

Smt. Kanti suggested, along with the other members that instead of distributing 3 kg. wheat per month per child mid-day meals should be given to the children in the school.

Stipend should be given on the basis of poor economic conditions of parents. Smt. Rafiq Jahan suggested that school teachers or Pradhan should keep a check that correct quantity of wheat is distributed.

The next issue was very important. It related to the expectations from the school system. Smt. Rafiq Jahan said that they had a lot of expectations from the school system, such as, the school should have good building with proper seating arrangement and the teachers are committed to their profession. It should also have adequate facilities of toilet and safe drinking water. Smt. Shila Devi expected regular and sufficient number of teachers in the school including some female teachers. She expected that every class will have a separate teacher. Smt. Kanti expected the school to conduct programmes of entertainment on a regular basis. Shri Nankulal expected supply of adequate quantity of mid-day meals in school. Smt. Shivpati expected the school to be within a short distance and easily approachable. Shri Ranjit expected free supply of study material from school to children belonging to poor families. Shri Latif expected that the school to have a play ground and adequate games material for children. Shri Kanaujia expected all children to be treated equally in school and the weak students are paid greater attention by teachers. Smt. Rafiq Jahan expected the school holidays to synchronize with the agricultural seasons, cultural traditions and local

festivals. Smt. Roop Rani said that to encourage girls to go to school there must be more lady teachers than males in school.

Issue No.10 was 'how to overcome the constraints they experience?' Shri Nankulal suggested that the most important step was to make parents aware about the importance of school education for their children in general and girls in particular. Shri Kanujia suggested that if parents take interest in the education of their children they will also keep in touch with the school. Their visits will encourage sincere teachers and compel the irregular and insincere teachers to improve their working. Such parents can also impress upon the Pradhan to take greater interest in the affairs of the school. Smt. Shila Devi felt the road leading to the school should be safe and properly maintained so that during rains there is no water logging. Shri Latif suggested that in order to make the school attractive, building should be adequate and be maintained properly. It must have basic amenities like toilet and drinking water. The rest of the participants supported these suggestions.

The last question for discussion related to the role the community can play in overcoming the constraints. Smt. Shivpati along with Shri Ranjit suggested that the respectable community leaders can impress upon the parents the importance of education for both boys and girls. They can persuade the parents not to engage their children in

agricultural and household work and for the care of siblings during school hours. Instead they must encourage their children to complete at least primary education. The community leaders can also impress upon the Gram Sabha to take greater interest in the education of village children by contributing funds for awarding prizes to good students and by providing books and clothes to school going girls of economically poor families. Their contribution will certainly modify the thinking of parents in favour of school education for their children.

8. VILLAGE NASIRWAPUR

Focus Group Discussion was held in village Nasirwapur of block Sidhaur. Since the block was selected on the criterion of the Scheduled Castes population the village was also selected on the same consideration. Nine of the participants in the discussion belonged to the same caste while one was a Muslim. The discussion was held on November 5, 1996 and lasted for about four and a half hours from about 2:0 PM. The participants in the discussion and their background is given in Table 8.

Table 8 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE NASIRWAPUR

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Smt. Khairun Nisan	F	30	Muslim (BC)	-	Housewife	Pradhan
Asha Ram	M	35	SC	VIII	Agri. Labour	Up Pradhan
Smt. Durga Devi	F	35	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Smt. Nanki	F	40	SC	-	Labour	Parent
Nandan	M	40	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Smt. Raj Rani	F	35	SC	-	Housewife	Parent
Sushil Kumar	M	37	SC	BA	Service	Teacher
Smt. Sushila	F	38	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Bhagirath	M	42	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent
Smt. Savitri	F	40	SC	-	Agri. Labour	Parent

As is evident the group consisted of six female and four male members. One of them was a teacher, one was a Gram Pradhan and one was an Up-Pradhan of the Gram Sabha. The summary of the discussion is given below.

Result of Discussion

The first question put to the participants for discussion was 'do you feel education as imparted by schools

to be important for your children?" Most of them responded positively by maintaining that school education was important. Shri Asha Ram, however, said that in the absence of any vocational/technical education in the school economically poor parents do not see any immediate gain from school education. Due to this some of them do not consider school education important for their children. He also pointed out that some of the enlightened parents consider education equally important for both boys and girls. However, Smt. Durga Devi contested this point and said that parents usually like to send boys to school and not girls. Shri Sushil Kumar supported this view by saying they must educate boys because boys add to the family income when they earn while girls get married and go away. There ensued on this issue a heated discussion. Shri Asha Ram said that the reason behind this thinking was, no doubt, poverty of parents due to which male and female elders in the family have to go out for work and the girls are required to look after household work but equally important was their lack of consciousness of the importance of girls education. The government was also not making any serious effort to popularise school education for girls. Parents need to be convinced that school education was important for boys and girls both. Smt. Nanhi observed that in comparison to boys girls were irregular in school. This was because when parents go out of the house to work their young school going age daughters do the household work and look after siblings.

Thus they are able to attend school for only 15-17 days a month. Smt. Raj Rani suggested that girls should get free books and stationery from the school. Besides, all girls should get stipend the rate of which should be higher than that for boys. This will certainly help in encouraging the parents for sending their daughters to school. If payment of stipend is linked with attendance the problem of irregularity will also be solved to a great extent.

To the next question 'why are the girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys?' Smt. Savitri said that the main reason for this was illiteracy of parents due to which parents think education of only boys is important. Poverty is another reason due to which some parents prefer their sons to complete their school education while they prefer their daughters to help them, directly or indirectly, in improving economic conditions. Smt. Raj Rani supported this view and added that in the village society education of girls is not considered important since they do not have to work in office like boys. On this logic there was disagreement among the participants. Shri Bhagirath said that situations had changed now and there were no such social customs which hinder the education of girls. Now a days most of the parents want to educate their girls also, their economic conditions, however, deter them. Smt. Khairun Nisan said that social customs like purdah hinder the education of girls in the Muslim community due to which girls are generally withdrawn before they complete school education.

If there had been separate schools for girls the situation would have been different. Smt. Sushila supported the above views and said that poverty, social customs and illiteracy among parents together were causing hindrance in the education of girls as some parents feel girls do not have to do jobs in offices, instead they have to get married and go away. They should, therefore, be proficient in household work. Some also feel that an 8-10 year old girls should not sit with boys in the school while some parents feel they will find it difficult to get a match for her if she is educated. Smt. Raj Rani observed that in comparison to boys girls were more sincere and serious about their studies if they are school going. She however, agreed with the observations of Smt. Sushila and felt that the situation with regard to girls education was just like that.

To solve these problems Smt. Nisan suggested that the government should initiate schemes through which people are able to get regular employment within the village. This may be done by helping the Gram Sabha in establishing cottage industries which will increase the income of the villagers and they will be able to afford the education of their daughters. Further, rate of stipend for girls should be higher than for boys and that it should be enhanced in every class. Such measures will help a great deal in encouraging higher enrolment and low drop-out among girls. Almost all the participants actively supported the suggestions of Smt. Khairun Nisan.

As regards issue number 4, i.e., the specific problems that the children of identified socially disadvantaged group (Scheduled Castes and Muslims) face in terms of schooling Shri Bhagirath said that the teachers do not give full attention to children of the Scheduled Castes and Muslims. This observation was supported by many of the participants. They also complained that teachers were neither regular nor punctual in time with the result weak students do not get enough help. Shri Asha Ram added that due to poverty Scheduled Castes and Muslim parents make their children do household work and sometimes even labour due to which they are not able to study. The parents belonging to this group were generally illiterate who engage their children in household work due to which they are not able to do their school homework which results in their irregular attendance and weak performance in the class. Smt. Khairum Nisan added that in the village and the school the relations between children of the upper castes and the Scheduled Castes and Muslims were perfectly cordial and they behave as equals. She, however, pointed out that due to poverty parents of the socially disadvantaged group are not able to provide books and stationery to their children on time. Smt. Raj Rani said that due to poverty they find it difficult to afford proper clothes for the school going girls.

To improve the situation Shri Asha Ram suggested that the teachers must be regular. They should also observe

school timings. They must pay equal attention to all children irrespective of their socio-economic background. Government must help all the children of the poor families by supplying free books and stationery and uniform for at least girl students, so that these children are encouraged to go to school. Shri Sushil Kumar suggested that the illiterate parents must be made aware of the importance of education and must be convinced that both boys and girls should be treated equally. Such a task should be undertaken by the Gram Sabha.

'As regard issue number 5 "what are the problems that girls of other groups face in terms of teachers attitude and peer group attitude?" Smt. Savitri said that although the peer group attitude was cordial, the attitude of the teachers was discriminatory. For this Smt. Sushila suggested that the government must give at least one years training to the teachers which should also include how to behave with students. Their behaviour towards students should also be taken into consideration in annual assessment of their performance.

The next issue for discussion was whether the children face problems in understanding the course. To this issue Smt. Khairum Nisan, Shri Asha Ram and Shri Sushil Kumar replied that they were not facing any problems in this context and thus no serious change in the language or text books was required.

The next issue (No.7) related to the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities. Shri Nandan and Smt. Nanhi said that due to inadequate building and lack of a toilet in school the children especially the girls have to face problems. Lack of a play ground is also a serious problem, especially for girls. Smt. Durga Devi suggested that the government must construct toilets in every school so that it is convenient especially for the girls. Every school, she suggested, must also have a play ground.

The next issue related to the welfare schemes for school going children. Smt. Raj Rani informed that all the Scheduled Castes and Muslim children in the village were getting stipend @ Rs.12 per month which was paid at the end of the year. All children were also getting 3 kgs. wheat per month per child. Shri Bhagirath suggested that the stipends should also be given to the children belonging to economically poor families irrespective of their caste. He further suggested that the wheat should be distributed through the village Pradhan, to avoid cheating in its weight.

The next issue was very important which aimed to understand their expectations from the school system. The group in the course of discussion expressed that it had lots of expectations from the school system. Smt. Khairan Nisan expected adequate number of teachers, i.e. one for each class

selected locally for the school. Shri Asha Ram expected the school to have a decent building with adequate number of rooms. Smt. Durga Devi expected the facility of recreational activities while Smt. Khairun Nisan wanted the school to provide mid-day meals to students. Smt. Nanhi expected the school to be within a short distance. The road leading to it should have at least kharanja. Smt. Raj Rani expected the school to supply study material free to all its students so that everybody has it in time. Shri Bhagirath expected the school to have a play ground and adequate supply of games material. Shri Sushil Kumar expected all the children to be treated equally by teachers in school while Shri Nandan expected the school holidays to match with the agricultural seasons, cultural traditions and local festivals. Smt. Savitri expected at least one lady teacher in school so that girls are encouraged to go to school.

Issue number 10 related to the ways to overcome the constraints they experience. Smt. Durga Devi suggested that the teachers must be given adequate training so that they give due attention to the children and teach them properly. Shri Sushil Kumar added that children of poor families must be given help in the form of free supply of books and stationery. The government must also see that school buildings are adequate and are properly maintained. There should be facilities of drinking water and toilet in every school.

The last issue was the role the community can play in overcoming the constraints. To this Shri Bhagirath suggested that the community elders and village leaders can convince the illiterate parents that education was important and that they must encourage their children to go to school. They can also impress upon the parents that school education was equally important for girls and they should not engage children in the household work or agricultural work at least during school timings. And, that they should not ruin the future of their children by keeping them illiterate and helpless as we are to-day. Other members of the group also supported the view of Shri Bhagirath.

9. VILLAGE BHIKHARPUR

Focus Group Discussion was held in village Bhikhpur of block Banikodar. Since the block was selected on the criterion of mixed population the village was also selected on the same basis. Five of the participants in the discussion belonged to Scheduled Castes, two to the Backward Castes and the rest three to the General (High) Castes. The discussion was held on November 7, 1996 and lasted for about

four and a half hours from about 10.30 AM. The background of the participants in the discussion is given in Table 9.

Table 9 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD AT VILLAGE BHIKHARPUR

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Smt. Sanna Tewari	F	45	Gen.	Inter	Service	Teacher
Jagdish Prasad	M	52	Gen.	Inter	Service	Teacher
Lakhan Lal	M	40	B.C	Inter	Service	Teacher
Surya Prasad	M	45	Gen.	B.A.	Service	Teacher
Ram Lotan	M	48	B.C	-	Cultivation	Parent
Radhey Shyam	M	30	S.C	Inter	Cultivation	Parent
Ram Samujh	M	34	S.C	VIIIth	Cultivation	Parent
Smt. Indrani	F	60	S.C	-	Housewife	Parent
Smt. Shyamkali	F	50	S.C	-	Housewife	Parent
Smt. Kamla	F	45	S.C	-	Agri. Labour	Parent

As is evident the group consisted of six male and four female participants. Four of them had education upto Intermediate while one was a Graduate. Four of the participants were teachers. The summary of the discussion is given below.

Result of Discussion

The first issue put to the participants for discussion was 'do you feel education as imparted by schools to be important for your children?' Most of them replied positively by maintaining that school education was important. Smt. Sanna Tewari said that educated children can get jobs and earn and add to the family income. Shri Radheyshyam added that education is important for both boys and girls. Like boys, educated girls can also become self reliant if they get regular job. Further, educated girls make good mothers. However, Shri Lakhman Lal said that parents in comparison to girls, prefer to enrol boys in school. He said that girls should not be educated much, since they get marry and go away and have to do household work. Thus education for boys is more important than that of girls. Smt. Indrani and Smt. Kamla supported this view. However, serious disagreement to this view was expressed by Smt. Shyamkali who said that the education of boys and girls is equally important. All parents now a days want to educate both their children. Shri Surya Prasad supported this view and pointed out that in their village both boys and girls were regular in school. This is because their parents were aware of the benefits of education. Smt. Shyamkali, however, observed that mostly those parents were sending their daughters to school who were either economically better-off or who were educated. The poor families, even if realize the importance of school education finds it difficult to send

them to school as they feel difficulty in arranging books and reasonable clothes for their girls. This view was agreed by most of the persons. They suggested that the government should provide assistance to the children of poor families so that they are encouraged to go to school.

To the next question 'why are girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys?' Shri Ram Lotan denied that girls are being taken out of school more quickly. He said that the intelligent boys and girls pass one class and go to a higher one, while those boys and girls who fail in examinations leave their studies. However, Smt. Sanna Tewari pointed out that it cannot be denied that girls have to do household work. Those parents who are poor engage their girls in agricultural work and in looking after siblings. This acts as an impediment in the education of girls. Due to poverty also parents discriminate among boys and girls. They continue sending boys to school while girls are detained if they fail in examinations. Shri Ram Samujh while supporting this view said that poverty makes the parents feel that education of girls is unimportant. He said that girls get married and go away. In their in-laws house also they have to do household work. They do not have to do jobs. They, therefore, think the girls need to be proficient in these activities. Smt. Sanna Tewari said the girls who are withdrawn from school do household work, look after siblings and in spare time do stitching, embroidery and knitting which are considered respectable for girls.

To encourage girls to continue their studies, Shri Radheyshyam suggested that the government should provide financial help to girls of poor families like free supply of books and stationery and stipend. He also suggested that if separate schools for girls are started in which training in handicrafts is also imparted, the parents will most willingly send their daughters to such schools.

Issue No.4 related to the specific problems that the children of socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled Castes and Muslims) face in terms of schooling. Shri Ram Lotan observed that the teachers who generally reach school late do not pay full attention to the children of the Scheduled Castes and Muslims. Students belonging to this group were generally weak in class and, therefore, need greater attention of teachers. The teachers, however, pay greater attention to better students. Another problem as Shri Radheyshyam elaborated was that since most of the parents were poor they arrange books and study materials for their children quite late.

Smt. Kamla suggested that the education officials should keep strict vigil on teachers so that they come to school regularly and on time and teach the children properly. They must also give more attention to the weaker students.

Issue No.5 for discussion was 'what are the problems that girls of other groups face in school in terms of

teachers attitude and peer group attitude?" Shri Lakhnial said that generally the teachers attitude towards children belonging to poor families was not sympathetic and attentive. However, the peer group attitude was cordial which had no feeling of superiority or inferiority. Shri Ram Lotan observed that in the absence of female teachers girls often feel alienated as generally active boys get greater attention of teachers. Smt. Shyam Kali and Shri Jagdish Prasad felt the school should have more female teachers than male if it has to attract more girls to join and remain regular.

The next issue for discussion was whether the children face problems in understanding the course. Shri Jagdish Prasad, Shri Radheyshyam and Smt. Kamla said that the children do not face any problems in this respect since the language and course was easily understandable. So no change was required in the books, course or study material.

The next issue for discussion was 'what are the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities?' Smt. Shyamkali said that there is no toilet in the school due to which children specially girls have to face lot of inconvenience. Smt. Sanna Tewari said lack of safe drinking water was a serious problem while Shri Radheyshyam said that the school does not have a play ground.

Shri Lakhnial suggested that a toilet must be provided in the school at the earliest while Shri Surya Prasad expressed the need of an India Mark II handpump for safe

drinking water for the students. Smt. Sanna Tewari felt that a play ground for the children was equally important and, therefore, Gram Sabha should help in this regard.

The next issue related to the existence of welfare schemes for school going children. Shri Surya Prasad informed that all the Harijan and Muslim children were getting stipend. In addition all school going children get 3 kgs. wheat per month per child. However, Shri Jagdish Prasad said that these schemes were not operating properly due to which children were facing problems. Distribution of wheat was irregular while stipend amount for the whole year is given at the end of the session. The schemes were also not benefiting the children directly as stipend money is kept by their parents and the wheat is consumed by the entire family. Shri Ramsamujh suggested that in order to encourage parents to enrol their children amount of stipend be increased and it should be distributed every month. Distribution of wheat must be done through the school and it must be given every month. All the participants agreed to these suggestions.

The next issue (No.9) was very important which related to the expectations of participants from the school system. Smt. Indrani felt that there should be committed, regular and adequate number of teachers in the school. Smt. Shyamkali expected the school to have a decent building with adequate number of rooms. Smt. Sanna Tewari expected to have recreational activities in the school and in order to attract parents monthly cultural programmes should become part of

the school activities. Shri Radheyshyam expected mid-day meals to be given to the children in school. Shri Surya Prasad expected the school to supply free study materials to all students. Shri Ram Lotan expected the school to have a play ground while Shri Jagdish Prasad expected equal treatment to all the children irrespective of their background. Smt. Kamla expected the school holidays to coincide with the agricultural seasons, cultural traditions and local festivals. She also expected the school to have at least one female teacher so that girls are encouraged to go to school.

The next question was 'what are the ways to overcome the constraints?' To this Shri Radheyshyam proposed that the responsibility of day-to-day administration, supervision and checking should be given to the Gram Pradhan. Shri Jagdish Prasad further added that the Pradhan should write annual report of (CR) teachers so that teachers pay heed to the advice of the Pradhan. Smt. Sanna Tewari suggested that an effective scheme of reward for good performance of teachers was most needed if their working is to be improved. Agreeing to this view Shri Surya Prasad proposed that every year some very good teachers in the district should be given extra increment while truant and irresponsible teachers should be punished by detaining their annual increment. These suggestions were highly appreciated and supported by other participants.

Shri Lakhman Lal said that the parents should also maintain close link with the school by visiting it off and on so that they are able to know about the performance of their children. The teachers will also understand their problems. Further, the teachers will most likely become regular and active as they will feel they were regularly watched by parents. Shri Jagdish Prasad felt if parent-teacher meetings are organized after every examination many problems of students and teachers can be sorted out. Shri Surya Prasad felt that it may have very encouraging results if three best children in each class are awarded for their over-all performance in a function, after the annual examinations. The Gram Sabha can help the school by providing small amount of money for this purpose. Shri Ram Singh felt some parents should also be awarded for taking interest in school education of their sons and daughters and in the activities of the school. The suggestions were highly appreciated by other participants.

The last question related to the ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints. Shri Jagdish Prasad suggested that the community elders can generate an environment in the village in favour of school education for children. They were also in a position to impress upon parents that entrusting the responsibility of household work on girls must be avoided during school timings and that all school going age children must be sent to school for a better future. Other participants agreed that generally elders were

respected in their village and they can influence the parents.

10. VILLAGE IBRAHIMABAD

The Block Banikodar was selected on criteria of mixed population. The same criteria was applied in the selection of the two villages for Focus Group Discussion. The village Ibrahimabad was one of them. The Focus Group Discussion was conducted in the village on November 8, 1996, which lasted for about four and a half hour from 1:30 PM. The background of the participants in the discussion is given in Table 10.

Table 10 : PROFILE OF PARENTS PARTICIPATED IN FGD
AT VILLAGE IBRAHIMABAD

Name	Sex	Age	Caste	Educa- tion	Occupation	Position in Village
Jai Bux Singh	M	51	Gen.	Vth	Cultivation	Parent
Satyanam	M	35	S.C.	-	Cultivation	Parent
Bisheshar	M	30	S.C.	-	Cultivation	Parent
Harish Chand	M	50	Gen.	Xth	Service	Teacher
A.K. Bhardwaj	M	30	Gen.	XIIth	Service	Teacher
Ishwar Sharma	M	40	Gen.	XIIth	Service	Teacher
Rasul	M	32	Muslim (BC)	-	Labour	Parent
Smt. Parvati	F	40	S.C.	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Ramkali	F	42	S.C.	-	Housewife	Panchayat Member
Smt. Premlata Singh	F	40	Gen.	XIIth	Service	Teacher

The group consisted of seven male and three females. Five of the participants were from the high castes, four from the Scheduled Castes and one from the Backward Caste Muslim. Four of the participants were teachers by profession while two of the females were members of the Gram Sabha.

Result of Discussion

The first issue raised for discussion was "do you feel education as imparted by schools to be important for your children?" Initiating the discussion Shri Jai Bux Singh considered school education important for children which besides imparting education also help them develop their personality and character. They learn how to behave with elders, with children of their own age group and with younger ones. They are also made conscious of punctuality as they are required to reach the school in time.

Most of the persons supported the view of Shri Jai Bux Singh but some of the participants were not convinced about the importance of education for children. Shri Rasul and Smt. Parvati felt that school education was not very important for many a parents as they feel : (a) there is no

immediate economic return; (b) by helping their parents children can contribute directly or indirectly to the earnings of the family; and, (c) since they cannot afford higher education their children will not be able to get an office job even if they complete primary education.

Shri Satyanam emphasized that school education was equally important for boys and girls as it may help the boy in getting employment or better earnings while it may be easier to get a good spouse for girls. Smt. Parvati, however, disagreed to this view. She thought that school education was not as important for girls as for boys. The primary responsibility of girls was their household work. They have to be proficient in this only. She thought that by attending the school for almost the full day they will not be able to devote sufficient time to the household work and will, therefore, not be able to learn how to shoulder their primary responsibilities efficiently. This view was, however, contested by most of the participants particularly by Shri Bisheshar who said that literate girls can perform their duties in a better way than the illiterate. Further, schooling also help develop better manners which will certainly help them to maintain good relations in their in-laws family. At this point Smt. Parvati and Shri Rasul while expressing their disagreement with Shri Bisheshar said that they don't like to send their daughters to school.

Shri Harish Chand mentioned that generally, in comparison to girls, boys were more irregular in school. They remain absents for weeks during July and August, in peak agricultural season. Many of the participants agreed to this observation and suggested that an awareness about the importance of school education needs to be generated among parents.

In relation to the next issue, i.e. why are the girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys, Shri Ishwar Sharma said that it was true only in case of girls belonging to economically poor families or where parents were illiterate. Smt. Parvati said that many parents felt that girls do not have to undertake job and they are to be married they, therefore, do not like their daughters to spend five years on school education. They are withdrawn after 2-3 years. Shri Resul mentioned that due to social customs importance to school education is not given for girls. In a number of families they are preferably taught to read Quran and Urdu. They also learn to read and write Hindi. The mothers in such families teach their daughters themselves, if they are literate or send their daughters to other ladies in the village, who teach them without any fee. Smt. Ram Kali said that due to poverty parents engage girls for looking after their siblings and the cattles, if they have. She also pointed out that such a practice was due to illiteracy among

parents. Shri Ishwar Sharma observed that more girls from poor families are withdrawn from school than girls belonging to comparatively better-off families.

Shri Bisheshar suggested that a large number of girls may complete their school education if the economic conditions of their parents are improved and that their mothers are not compelled to take-up employment in agriculture. He also suggested that regular programmes should be organized to emphasize the importance of girls education. The NGOs working in rural areas may be helpful in convincing people through interesting cultural programmes.

The next issue for discussion was 'what are the specific problems the children of identified socially disadvantaged group face in terms of schooling?' Shri Harish Chand referred to some of the difficult words that are used in the text book which the children generally find difficult to understand. Shri Ishwar Sharma observed that due attention towards weak children is not possible because of shortage of teachers. Shri Rasul pointed out that children from poor families remain generally irregular in school because they are engaged in household activities. They, therefore, become weak and disinterested in their studies. Smt. Pervati pointed out that due to illiteracy parents are unable to help their children in completing home work. Due to the fear of teachers they absent from the school.

Shri Jai Bux Singh suggested use of easy and familiar words in the text books. He also suggested regular inspection of school so that teachers remain regular and the authorities also feel the need of additional teachers.

In response to the next issue (No.5) Shri Satyanam said that the teachers' attitude towards girls was not sympathetic. They do not care if the girls are irregular. They pay more attention towards boys. Shri Harish Chand suggested that the administration and supervision of the school should be transferred to the Gram Sabha. He also suggested periodical training of teachers.

As regards the issue No.6, Shri Harish Chand thought that the language of the text books need simplification and difficult words needs to be changed. He was supported by Smt. Ram Kali.

The next issue for discussion was 'what are the problems the children in general and girls in particular face in terms of physical facilities?' Smt. Prem Lata Singh felt that in the absence of a toilet children in general and girls in particular were facing problem. It, therefore, needs to be constructed at the earliest.

As regards different schemes for school going children (No.8) all the participants expressed their awareness about the provision of stipend for all the Scheduled Castes and

Muslim children. They also informed that three children belonging to the Backward Castes were also getting the same. The provision of 3 kg. wheat per child per month was also known to them.

Smt. Ram Kali informed that the stipend for the year is paid in lump-sum, once in a year. The timing for its payment is, however, not fixed. Shri Ishwar Sharma informed that distribution of wheat was not regular. So far during this session it has been distributed only once, during July 1996. Since the last three months the children have not received it.

Smt. Ram Kali suggested that the amount of stipend of Rs.12 per month should be increased as it was highly inadequate and instead of supply of wheat children should be provided mid-day meal in the school.

Smt. Prem Lata Singh and Shri Jai Bud Singh suggested that stipend to children should be given on the basis of economic conditions of their parents, and no consideration of caste or religion should be made in this regard. Smt. Parvati suggested that if the wheat distribution scheme continues it should be distributed through Gram Sabha.

In response to the next question 'what are their expectations from the school system?' (No.9) Smt. Premlata Singh expected the school to have one teacher per class. She also wanted the school to have trained and local teachers.

Shri Jai Bux Singh thought the school should have adequate number of class rooms. Shri Satyanam thought the school should have recreational activities. Shri Bisheshar considered provision of mid-day meal will be beneficial for children. Shri A.K. Bhardwaj thought the school should supply text books to the children of the poor families. Shri Rasul expected the teachers will treat every child equally, irrespective of his/her economic, caste or religious background. He also expected the school should have at least one lady teacher. Smt. Parvati thought the schools will observe holidays during peak agricultural season.

To maintain the regularity of teachers and make them more active, Shri Harish Chand suggested the responsibility of school administration should be transferred to the Gram Sabha.

In relation to the next issue (No.10) regarding the ways to overcome the constraints they experience Shri Rasul said there was no Urdu teacher in the school. There were a number of children particularly girls who wanted to study Urdu but were deprived. The appointment of an Urdu teacher will solve their problem.

Shri Satyanam suggested that all children belonging to economically poor families should be given stipend, books and stationery through the school. The children should also be given mid-day meal. Almost all the participants actively

supported this view. Smt. Prem Lata Singh suggested the appointment of at least one lady teacher will encourage the parents to send their daughters to school. Shri Ishwar Sharma suggested the school building should be adequate and there should be one teacher for every class.

In response to the last issue (No.11) Shri Ishwar Sharma said the community leaders can play an important role in influencing parents to send their children to school and in discouraging them from engaging their children in household work during school timings. Smt. Prem Lata Singh thought the community leaders can convince the parents about the necessity and utility of girls education. Most of the participants agreed that the community leaders are generally respected by the people of their community and that they can influence their attitude in favour of school education for children.

IMPORTANT POINTS EMERGED IN DISCUSSION

The important points that emerged in FGDs in the ten selected villages of the District were as under :

Issue No. 1

1. Most of the participants in the FGD in the selected ten villages of the district observed that school education was important for their children. They also considered it equally important for boys and girls as it help them : (a) get respect in the society; and (b) do better in every walk of life.
2. Educated girls get spouse from better families and they can manage their household activities and look-after their families in a better way.
3. Educated children can benefit more from various welfare programmes of the government.
4. Education helps children to develop their personality, good character, manners and behaviour.
5. Schooling make the children conscious about punctuality as they are required to reach the school in time.

6. The school going girls were considered more serious in their studies than boys.

Some of the Parents, however, think that :

7. There is no immediate economic-return of the school education whereas by helping their economically poor parents children can contribute, directly or indirectly, to the earnings of the family.
8. The primary responsibility of girls was household work. They have to be proficient in this only. Schools do not teach about such things. By attending the school for almost the full day they cannot devote sufficient time to the household work and will, therefore, not be able to learn how to shoulder their primary responsibilities efficiently.
9. School education for girls was not as important as for boys as after marriage they have to go to their in-laws' house and they have to be proficient in household work. Further, people find it difficult to get a match for their daughters if they are educated.
10. Poverty of parents prevent them from sending their children, particularly girls, to school.

11. Since school does not provide any vocational/technical training, economically poor parents do not see any immediate gain from school education.
12. Economically poor parents feel that boys can contribute to the family earnings by working during agricultural season while girls may help by doing household work and leaving their mothers free to work and earn.
13. Due to poverty and illiteracy some of the parents generally do not consider schooling of girls as important as they consider it for boys.
14. Sending children to school is waste of time because the teachers were insincere and irregular and they do not take interest in their job.
15. In families where girls are required to look-after household work they remain irregular in school and where boys have to work with their fathers, particularly during agricultural season they remain irregular in their class.

Issue No.2

1. Girls were generally withdrawn from school earlier than boys in case parents were economically poor or illiterate.

2. As the girls in such families have to shoulder the responsibilities of cooking food, looking after siblings and collecting fodder for the family cattles they become irregular in their school. Eventually, they drop-out earlier than boys.
3. Due to social customs parents feel that girls of 8-9 years age sitting with boys in school was not desirable. They, therefore, withdraw them when they reach that age.
4. Due to illiteracy parents do not realize the importance and utility of school education for girls and, therefore, they do not encourage them to go to school regularly. The girls also lose interest in the school and ultimately drop-out.
5. Due to co-education and the practice of purdah system among some of the Muslim families parents withdraw their daughters after one or two years of schooling.
6. Absence of lady teachers in the school also has a negative effect on the thinking of parents which discourages some of them to send their daughters to school.
7. Since girls do not have to take-up job in office, there is no point in wasting five years in school. They are, therefore, withdrawn when they develop the ability to read and write.

8. Due to illiteracy and poverty, parents do not attach importance to girls education and, therefore, after one or two years of their schooling prefer girls to stay in home and look-after the household work.
9. Some parents discriminate between boys and girls. Generally, schooling of boys continue even if they fail in examinations while girls are withdrawn if they perform similarly.

Issue No.4

1. Some participants suggested the language used in the text books need simplification as children find it difficult to understand some of the difficult words.
2. Generally, children belonging to socially disadvantaged group were weak in the class as due to their involvement in household/earning activities they become irregular in the school or their parents being illiterate were unable to help them complete their home work. They, therefore, need greater attention and support of teachers which, however, was not possible due to shortage of teachers and a high student-teacher ratio.

3. The teachers generally pay greater attention towards the good students and the weak students, who generally, belong to this category of population, suffer.
4. Most of the parents in this group are economically very poor and, therefore, find it difficult to arrange books and stationery for their children in time.
5. A common observation of the participants was that school going girls need proper clothes while parents in the socially disadvantaged group find it difficult to arrange them due to their poverty. They felt it as an important reason for irregular attendance of girls in school.
6. A common observation of the participants was that the teachers were irregular in attending the school. They also do not observe school timings due to which the weak students suffer most. They also loose interest in their studies.
7. Some of the contents in text books were felt unfamiliar and not so useful by children. Its language is more urbanised.
8. The facility for teaching urdu in the school was not adequate. After the transfer of an Urdu teacher posting of another takes lot of time. Since the urdu teacher has also to teach other subjects he pays little attention towards teaching of this language.

9. Lack of lady teachers in school work as a deterrent for girls in general and those who are weak in their studies in particular.

Issue No.5

1. Due to large number of students in the class teachers were not paying adequate attention to the children. Some, however, observed that irrespective of caste background the children belonging to the economically poor families were generally not paid due attention by the teachers. Since most of the families in socially disadvantaged group were also economically poor the teachers attitude affects the children from the families under this group most.
2. Some participants observed that the behaviour of the teachers was not good and even on minor mistakes children are beaten due to which often children give lame excuses for not attending the school.
3. The general observation about peer group attitude was that the relations among children were cordial and there was no feeling of caste or religion among them. Some of the participants, however, observed that the attitude of children belonging to the other group towards those from

the socially disadvantaged group changes if one from the later group visit the house of a child belonging to the farmer group to seek his help in completing school assignment. The children of the weaker group generally do not get their help in this regard.

4. The teachers are generally irregular and do not observe school timings. They are, therefore, not able to give sufficient time to children.
5. Teachers discriminate students' on the basis of their socio-economic background.
6. In the absence of female teachers girls often feel alienated as only the active boys get attention of the teachers. Teachers do not generally pay due attention towards girls. They don't care if they are irregular. They pay more attention towards boys.

Issue No.6

Though some participants felt that there was a need to simplify the language of the text book by replacing difficult words, most of the participant, however, observed that their children had no serious problem in understanding the contents of the text book. They felt neither the language nor the contents were difficult to understand.

Issue No.7

The problems that the children in general and girls in particular face due to inadequate physical facilities as identified by the participants were :

1. In four villages, the road leading to the school was bad and uneven and difficult to be used during rainy season when it normally remain water logged.
2. Non-existence of a toilet within the school buildings of eight villages cause serious problem, particularly for girls.
3. Lack of a safe source of drinking water in the school in seven villages was mentioned as a serious problem for children particularly during summers.
4. Absence of a play ground was considered a serious draw back for children in eight villages due to which they were not able to play.
5. The participants in the FGD were very critical about the lack of basic facilities like toilet and drinking water. For the bad condition of road leading to the school they generally criticised the Gram Sabha which did not care for the school-going children.
6. Inadequate building of the school which cannot conveniently accomodate the number of children enrolled.

Similarly, the number of rooms were much less than number of classes, due to which teaching is affected adversely. Besides, teachers' attention is also divided as students of more than one class sit in a room due to which the students suffer.

Issue No. 8

1. The participants were aware about the schemes in operation for schooing going children. They mentioned about (a) the provision of 3 kg. wheat per child per month; and (b) stipend paid to all the children belonging to the Scheduled Castes and to some of the Muslims @ Rs.12 per month. At a few places the participants also mentioned that some children belonging to the poor families of other castes were also getting the stipend.
2. The participants also informed that the stipend amount for a year was paid in one instalment, at the end of the school session.
3. The distribution of wheat was termed by the participants in villages as "highly irregular". In most of the places children had received wheat only once or twice during the last about five months. Thus, they had

received only 3 kg. or 6 kg. wheat while they should have been given 15 kg. during the period. They also complained about cheating in weighing the wheat by the supplier. Most of them observed that instead of 3 kg., they had actually received not more than 2.5 kg.

Issue No.9

While discussing this issue the participants in the FGDs expressed their expectations from the school system. They expected the schools to have :

1. A decent building with separate room for each class.
2. Easy approach and location at a short distance of not above 1 km.
3. Basic facilities such as a toilet, safe source of drinking water, play ground and games material.
4. Programmes for recreational/cultural activities for students as well as parents.
5. Mats for children and adequate furniture for teachers.
6. Committed regular and trained preferably local teachers.
7. Separate teachers for each class.

8. Preferably more or at least one lady teacher.
9. Teachers belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslim community in the schools located in areas having significant population of these groups.
10. Teachers who treat all children equally irrespective of their social/economic background.
11. Teachers who pay greater attention towards weak students.
12. An environment which has no traces of any kind of discrimination on the basis socio-economic background of students.
13. Ameliorative programmes such as supply of adequate quantity of mid-day meal to all children, books and stationery to those belonging to economically poor families and one set of uniform per year to all the girl students.
14. Programme of health check-up of children, at least twice a year.
15. Holidays in accordance with agricultural season and local festivals.
16. Facilities for technical/vocational training for boys and training in handicrafts, tailoring, knitting and embroidery for girls so that their education in school becomes more meaningful.

17. In the curriculum provision of teaching of English and Urdu also, besides other subjects.

Issue No. 10

1. First of all the participants thought the parents have to be made aware of the importance of school education for their children in general and girls in particular. The teachers can play a significant role by keeping regular contacts with parents of particularly the non-school going children and by generating in them interest in school activities through regular get-togethers or cultural programmes in the school.
2. More female teachers than males can create a better environment in school. It will also attract more parents for sending their daughters.
3. An adequate school building with sufficient physical facilities and regular, trained and committed teachers will improve the village environment in favour of school education of children.
4. A scheme of reward and punishment for good and bad teachers will help in disciplining the truant, irregular and careless teachers.

5. The day-to-day management of the school should be made the responsibility of the Gram Pradhan who should also be given power to write annual CR of teachers.
6. A reasonable amount of stipend, not less than Rs.25 per month, should be paid to all the school going girls. Besides, they should also be provided books and stationery and one set of clothes per year so that girls and their parents both feel interested in their schooling.
7. There should be opportunities for higher studies for girls within a reasonable distance so that they can be encouraged to complete their primary education and avail the opportunity of higher education.

Issue No. 11

1. Generally, the participants in the FGDs felt the community can play a significant role in developing an environment in favour of school education of children. They observed that in the village society some values still exist. Generally, people have respect for elders. Parents of even married children have greater control over the family matters and their say in the affairs of their grand children is greater than that of their sons.

The older persons were, however, generally illiterate. Any effort for removing the constraints with regard to the schooling of children will, therefore, have to be made through them. But, first they will have to be convinced.

2. The active and enlightened older persons of the village can convince the parents of non-school going children about the necessity of sending their children to school. Since most of the parents were generally not very enthusiastic about the education of girls the elder family members can play a significant role in convincing them about the need to educate their daughters.
3. The elders in different caste and religious communities can help promote an environment favourable to girls education in their community, if they can be convinced to actively supports it. The parents in the younger generation will easily get convinced. They also observed that the influence of caste or religious leaders on the members of their community was significant and people generally follow their advice. If they actively try, they can easily persuade parents for enrolling their children in the school.
4. The Pradhan and members of Gram Sabha can also encourage parents for sending their children to school by advocating for the cause individually, and through the Gram Sabha meetings collectively.

5. The village/community leaders/elders through their concerted efforts can impress upon the parents not to engage their children and particularly girls in household work and for the care of their siblings, at least during school hours so that they can attend the school regularly.
6. The Pradhan should maintain a record about the school going age children not enrolled in the school. This can facilitate checking with parents in the beginning of the school session if they have enrolled their children. Their respective community leaders should also be given this information so that they can also try to influence the parents belonging to their own community.
7. The participants observed that people generally blame their poor economic conditions for their inability in sending their children to school but the fact is that most of them do no realize the necessity of school education for their children. The village and the community leaders/elders can create the consciousness among such parents as the views of village/community leaders/elders are generally respected.
8. The educated persons in the village can also contribute significantly to this cause by helping school going children in completing their school assignments.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERVENTION

The Focus Group Discussions in the ten villages selected in the district for the purpose were lively as care was taken that every one of the participants should take an active part and express his/her views freely. During the course of discussion the participants suggested certain measures for improving the conditions in favour of education of children in general and girls in particular. Their suggestions have been included in the village-wise report of FGDs. In the following we present a summary of the important suggestions received from the participants of the FGDs in district Barabanki.

I. During the discussions two major reasons for indifferent attitude of parents towards school education of children in general and girls in particular had emerged. They were : (a) poverty; and (b) illiteracy among them.

To attract poor parents to enrol their children and allow them to complete their primary education the suggestions included :

- (a) Books and stationery should be provided by the school to all school going children belonging to the poor families.
- (b) The stipend should be paid to all the school going children belonging to the economically poor families.
- (c) The present rate of stipend was considered meagre and, therefore, unattractive. It should, therefore, be enhanced to a reasonable amount.
- (d) All school going girls should be given stipend - irrespective of their socio-economic background. The present rate was highly inadequate particularly for girls. To enable the economically poor parents to arrange reasonable clothes for their school going daughters they should be paid a monthly stipend of at least Rs.25/-.
- (e) In order to attract parents for retention and completion of school education of their daughters the rate of monthly stipend should be gradually enhanced in every class.
- (f) The payment of stipend should be made every month, instead of the present system of payment at the end of the school session. The monthly payment of stipend should be linked with a minimum of 75 percent of attendance of the child in the month.

- (g) All Muslim children should also be paid stipend as they also belong to the socially disadvantaged group.

II. To develop consciousness among illiterate parents about the importance and utility of school education for their children the following measures were proposed:

- (a) The literacy campaign for adults will have to be carried out by the concerned agencies in reality. Merely writing of slogans on wall will not mean anything. The illiterates should be contacted individually and convinced about its significance. The volunteers should sincerely and actually devote time for teaching them. The Gram Sabha members, school teachers, village and community elders can help a lot in this regard. Their active support and cooperation must be sought to generate an environment in favour of the campaign.
- (b) The Gram Sabhas should be awarded in case at least 75 per cent of illiterates in their villages have become literate.
- (c) Parents must be convinced that (a) school education was equally important for boys and girls; and, (b) besides making them literate the school help the children in improving their capabilities, manners

and discipline. Such abilities will help them in managing their household in a better way. They should also be convinced that they should not consider schooling of children as a loss of direct or indirect family earnings. They should look at it as a means for their better future. They should, therefore, feel responsible for the household work and the school going age children should not be detained at home for this purpose. The household work for girls must be avoided during school hours so that they can attend the school regularly. For this purpose, the village/community elders, Gram Sabha members and school teachers can play a significant role.

- (i) In the village society village/community elders are still respected. If they actively take interest in the school education of children and try to persuade their parents it is most likely to have a good effect on their indifferent attitude towards schooling of children in general and girls in particular.
- (ii) The members of the Gram Sabha particularly, women and those from the socially disadvantaged group can influence the attitudes of the parents and convinced about the

desirability of school education for their children.

(iii) The Gram Sabha should maintain a record of school going and non-school going children and parents of the school going children should be given preference in employment under JRY.

(iv) The school teachers can help a lot in developing the village environment in favour of school education for children. They should arrange get-togethers of parents in the school. Periodical cultural programmes in school may also bring the parents closer to them. If a close rapport is established between teachers and parents the parents may feel interested in enrolling their non-school going children. They may also take interest in sending them to school regularly.

(v) The teachers should also show through their sincerity and regularity that the time that children spend in the school is not wasted.

(d) If some elementary vocational training is also arranged for boys in the school and that in handicrafts, tailoring, embroidery and knitting for girls the parents will certainly feel attracted

towards the school and will consider it gainful for their children.

- (e) The weak students irrespective of their socio-economic background must get greater attention of teachers.
- (f) The teachers must be regular and punctual in attending the school. This will have a better impact on students as well as their parents.
- (g) Home work assignments to students should be avoided by teachers. Instead, the students should be asked to complete exercises in the school itself.
- (h) A scheme for rewarding the good and punishment for insincere teachers is most needed if their working is to be improved. Some very good teachers should be given advanced increment while truant and irregular teachers should be punished by withholding their annual increment.

III. To attract the parents as well as children to the school the discussants also suggested a number of measures related to the school.

- (a) For smooth teaching the school should have an adequate building with one room for each of the classes. It should be properly maintained.

- (b) The school should have minimum basic facilities such as, mat for seating of children and necessary furnitures for teachers; a toilet; an India Mark II handpump for safe drinking water; some sports material and, a play ground.
- (c) The location of the school should be at a convenient place, i.e. near the habitation, and its distance should not be more than a kilometre.
- (d) The road leading to the school should be safe and properly maintained by laying kheranja so that there is no water logging during rainy season.
- (e) The school should have one teacher for each class. The teachers should be trained.
- (f) There should be more female teachers than males. In any case, the school must have at least one lady teacher.
- (g) The school should have an Urdu teacher where parents want their children to study the language. The Urdu teacher should not be assigned the teaching of other subjects so that he can devote his full time on teaching of his subject.
- (h) Due to the shortage of teachers student do not get their attention and weak students and girls suffer most. The number of students per teacher should, therefore, be reasonable.

(i) While giving contract for repairs or construction of the school building village/local contractors should be avoided. The Pradhan and the school Head Master should supervise the work. They should be held responsible for any sub-standard work in this connection.

IV. Some of the suggestions of the participants with regard to the working of the school were also related to the Gram Sabha. They included :

- (a) To maintain regularity and punctuality among teachers and their interest in teaching the responsibility of day-to-day administration and supervision of the school should be entrusted to the Gram Sabha.
- (b) The Pradhan should also be given powers to write annual confidential report of teachers.

V. A common complaint of the participants of FGDs was that the supply of wheat to the school going children was highly irregular and whenever they received the supply its weight was not more than 2.5 kg. instead of 3 kg. They therefore, suggested :

- (a) replacing the scheme of distribution of wheat with supply of mid-day meals in the school;
- (b) if the present scheme is to continue, its regular supply must be assured; and, it should be distributed in the school under the supervision of the Head Master and the Pradhan.

The participants of the FGDs considered the above measures were important for improving the situation with regard to enrolment, attendance and drop-out. They thought that such measures will benefit the children in general and girls and those belonging to the identified socially disadvantaged group in particular.

Appendix I

LEADING QUESTIONS ON WHICH THE VIEWS OF THE PARTICIPANTS ARE TO BE SOUGHT IN THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. Do they feel education as imparted by schools to be important for their children?
2. Why are the girls being taken out of school more quickly than boys?
3. Why are tribal children being taken out of school more quickly than others?
4. What are the specific problems the children of identified socially disadvantaged group (SC, ST, Muslims) face in terms of schooling?
5. What are the problems girls of other group face in school in terms of teachers attitude and peer group attitude?
6. What are the problems faced in the understanding of the course?
7. What are the problems the children in general and girls in particular that they face in terms of physical facilities?
8. What do the participants of FGD feel about different schemes that are in operation for school going children in these areas?
9. What are the expectations from the school system?
10. What are the ways to overcome the constraints they experience?
11. In what ways the community can participate in overcoming the constraints?

Appendix II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (FOR PARENTS)

SOCIAL ASSESSMENT STUDIES

Sponsored by

**UTTAR PRADESH EDUCATION FOR ALL PROJECT
State Project Office
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Conducted by

**GIRI INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
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1. District : 2. Block :
3. Village :
4. Name of Respondent :
4.1 Sex : M/F 4.2 Age :
4.3 Caste : General/SC/ST/DBC/Muslim/Other
4.4 Occupation :
4.5 Monthly Income :
4.6 Educational Qualification :
4.7 Total number of children in 6-11 years in the family:
Boys : Girls :

Enrolment in School

6. Do all of them go to school? Yes/No
6.1 If no, how many of them are not going to school?
Boys : _____ Girls : _____

- 6.2 If any boy/girl of 6-11 years age in your family is not enrolled in school, please state reasons for his/her non-enrolment :

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
-------------	--------------

1. Long distance of school from the village
2. No interest of the child in education
3. No utility in sending to school
4. Poor economic condition of family
5. Too early to send him/her to school (age)
6. Insincere teachers in school
7. Inconvenient school timings
8. Needed in family occupation
9. Needed for household work
10. Needed for care of younger children
11. No lady teachers in the school
12. Others (specify)

Regularity in School

7. If children in 6-11 years age group are enrolled in school, do they attend their school regularly?

Boys : Yes/No Girls : Yes/No

8. How many days did they attend the school last month?

Boys : Girls :

9. What do they do if they don't attend their school?

Boys : Girls :

- 9.1 If they don't do anything during their absence from school, please specify reasons for their non-attendance?

Boys :

Girls :

Drop-Outs

10. Has any child in your family left the school without completing studies?

Yes/No

10.1 If yes, please give details about him/her:

Name of the child	Sex M/F	Class in which dropped	Age at which dropped
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

11. What were the reasons for your children dropping out of school?

Boys Girls

1. Inability to bear school expenses
2. Household work
3. Looking after siblings
4. Engagement in earning to improve family's economic condition
5. Opposition in family over sending of young girls to school
6. No lady teachers in the school
7. No utility of school education
8. Child's lack of interest :
 - a) Bad company of non-school going children
 - b) Disinterested in education
 - c) Failure in examination
9. Illness
10. Inconvenient school timing

11. Teacher's indifferent attitude towards students
12. Harsh behaviour of teacher
13. Irregular/Uncommitted teacher
14. Waste of time - no proper teaching in school
15. Others (specify)

12. Would you like to send your non-school going child/girl to school and see that he/she completes studies?

Yes/No

- 12.1 If yes, under what conditions it will be possible for you?

Boys Girls

1. Enrolment of non-school going children
2. Regularity in attendance
3. Completing the school education

13. Is any of your school going child/girl getting any assistance from school?

Yes/No

- 13.1 If yes, what?

14. On whose schooling you put more stress?

Daughters : Sons : Both : None :

- 14.1 If son, what are the reasons?

1. A son is to get educated as he is to earn his bread
2. A son needs education to add to the family income
3. A son's education is important for the parents as he is to maintain his parents in their old age.
4. A son's education adds to the status of the family
5. The community gives prime importance on the son's education
6. If any other, please specify:

14.2 If stress not on the daughter's education, what are the reasons?

1. Marriage is the 'be-all and the end-all' of a daughter's life
2. A daughter normally depends upon her spouse for her livelihood
3. A daughter cannot digest the contents of education
4. A daughter's education does not add to the status of the family
5. Getting a suitable match for an educated daughter is problematic
6. If any other, please specify.

14.3 If you are giving importance on your daughter's education, give reasons:

1. An educated girl can become self-reliant and confident
2. Education increases the employment opportunity for the girl
3. An educated daughter can fetch a higher bride price/Mehar
4. The amount of dowry will be lessened for an educated girl
5. An educated girl can ensure education for further generations
6. Education of a girl can improve the health and nutritional status of the family members
7. Education can make the girls and women conscious of their legal rights in the society
8. Education will prepare the girls for decision making process in all walks of life. For example, family, panchayats and legislatures and will prepare them to take up leadership roles in the society

9. Education can bring health consciousness among the girls and as such can reduce the family size and put a check on maternal and infant mortality

10. Education can hike the age of marriage

11. If any other, please specify

15. Please give your suggestions on the following questions:

Do you want any change to be brought about in the present education systems of the school?

Yes/No

15.1 If yes, please specify

16. Do you want any change to be brought about in the present curriculum?

Yes/No

16.1 If yes, please specify

17. Do you want any change to be brought about in the society which will encourage the girls to go for education?

Yes/No

17.1 If yes, please specify

18. What more supportive mechanisms you are expecting which can promote education for your children?

a) For the girls

b) For the SCs

c) For the STs

d) For the Muslims